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by Theodore Dreiser

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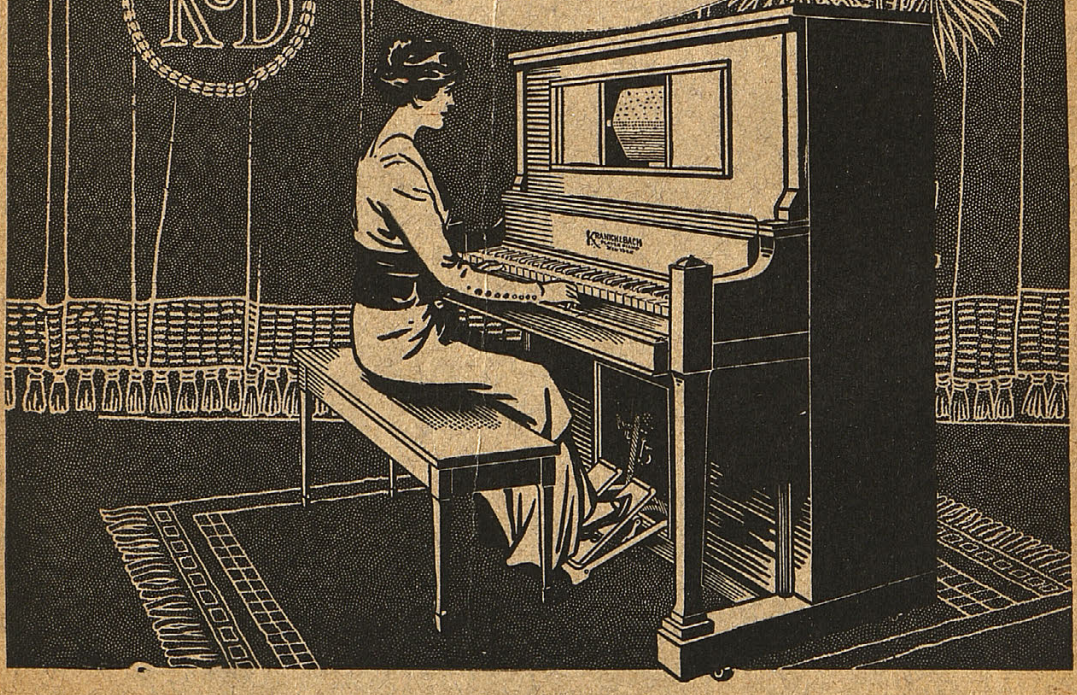
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Vol. XLIV DECEMBER, 1914 No. 4

THE SMART SET

Edited by
GEORGE JEAN NATHAN
and
H. L. MENCKEN

Manuscripts *must* be addressed, "Editors of THE SMART SET"

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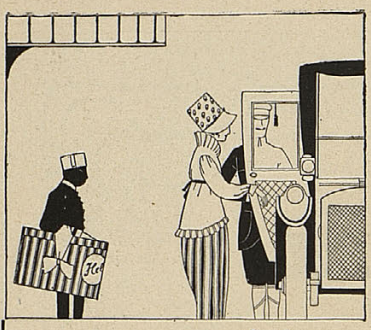
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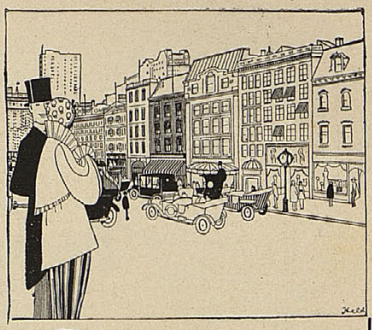
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New York County No. 643
New York Register No. 5107
My commission expires March 30, 1915



Read in the January
SMART SET
Robert Vale's novel novelette
"The Funeral King"

The Editors of the Smart Set beg to announce that arrangements have been made whereby the best new work of **Theodore Dreiser,** author of "Sister Carrie," "Jennie Gerhardt," etc., will appear in this magazine.

Arnold Bennett has called Mr. Dreiser the greatest novelist that America has yet produced, and in this verdict such men as Frank Harris and W. J. Locke concur. His "Sister Carrie" is regarded in England as one of the few truly great novels of the past 20 years.

Mr. Dreiser is not a story-teller for the populace, though his audience is constantly widening. He does not manufacture romantic best-sellers. His appeal, like that of Joseph Conrad, is made to that smaller public which differentiates accurately between genuine literature and empty poppycock. In brief, he addresses himself to the same audience that the Smart Set addresses.

Beginning in this issue we shall present, first of all, three experiments that he has made in play-writing. These plays are arrestingly original and unusual. They resemble no other plays ever printed. We believe that the readers of the Smart Set will be interested in them —and in the other new things, more in the key of "Sister Carrie" and "The Titan", that will follow them.

READ IN THE JANUARY
SMART SET

"Simple Suzanne," by Elinor Maxwell, a story of the disaster wrought at a smart house-party by an innocent Little One in a simple Little Dress with a plain Little Collar.

"The Last Adventure of Craig Kennedy," by Frank R. Adams, author of "Rum"—a burlesque of the staggering monthly exploits of a certain familiar sleuth.

"The Bureau of Exchange of Trouble," the latest and most alluring tale from the studio of the illustrious Irishman, **Lord Dunsany.** The editors have arranged with Lord Dunsany for several of his new stories and one-act plays.

"First and Third Tuesdays," by Charles Hanson Towne—a fiction peep into one of the most amusing of New York's off-Avenue salons.



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THE SMART SET

Nothing to "improve" your mind, but plenty to tickle you

"AND A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM"

By Millicent Dobbs Kenny

THE snow swirled against the window in great gusts. Agatha Brewster sat looking into the flaming grate.

"What's the matter, mamma dear?" asked Betty, her little daughter. "You look so sad—*and this is Christmas eve.*"

Agatha did not answer. She could not trust her voice. There was a mist before her eyes. She sat there thinking, thinking, thinking. It was just a year ago tonight that Dave, her husband, had parted from her in anger. Since then no word, no letter—nothing but endless conferences with that hideous lawyer, the unbearable condolences of well-meaning friends, the dull heart-ache, the thought of little Betty. . . .

(*Continued on the next page*)

Betty crept noiselessly down the stairs.

"Papa! Oh, papa! My papa!" she cried. "You've come home again. Won't Santa Claus be glad!"

Brewster, his eyes suddenly blinded with tears, grabbed the sweet child to his breast and hugged her, oh, so close! And then, bending down, he kissed the brave little woman at his side.

The End.

If you want to read the parts of this story that we have left out to save ink, you will find the whole sad, lovely thing in any issue of any 15 cent magazine. We say *any* issue, but if you want to make doubly sure, get any *Christmas* issue.

THE WOMAN WHO LOST

By Helen Woljeska

1.

HOW little is needed to make one feel at home—to make me feel at home! When my old carved mahogany chest is uncrated and unpacked, my cushions are piled on any nondescript couch, some much beloved books and prints placed within reach, and the green bronze incense burner begins to send up clouds of curiously fragrant smoke—then, holding my Small One's dear face against my breast—then I am at home, no matter where I may be.

2.

The Boardwalk to me is quite unique. When I turn my head to one side—I see the ocean, passionate and wonderful, and the wide space of wind-swept Winter sky. When I turn my head to the other side—I see the big hotels and the little shops, with all the art and artifice of cosmopolitan civilization. And between the two, the stream of people is floating. To their right, the grandeur of eternity. To their left, the fretfulness of time. But their faces are turned towards the big hotels and little shops. . . .

There *is* a fascination of those little shops! with their multicolored wares from all parts of the world—Persia and Russia, and Norway and Japan, Parisian frocks and London hats, Hungarian embroideries and Irish laces. . . . "There are still many lovely things for me in this world, down to the shop windows and sunsets of great cities. . . ."

3.

On New-Year's Eve I sat up with a dear familiar book-friend until about ten, and then went to bed quite as usual. What is New Year's Eve to me? One day is like another, and a new year as an old. I want to forget how many a one I have lived in sorrow. New Year's Eve is not for me to celebrate.

But at midnight the bells, and the shooting, shouting and whistling woke me after all. I became dreamily conscious of my Boy's small, warm body close to me, his little cold nose against my shoulder, his sleepily whispered "Happy New Year"—dreamily, fearfully conscious of the infinite darkness all around us two loving ones, of the everlasting, roaring sea of eternity . . . that carries away, one after another, those tremulous drops we call years. Oh, how small are we! How awful is Time. How mysterious is Life. How fragile is Love. . . .

No. Though we must vanish, our love will remain—in every mother and child who are united as we two.

4.

My life here is quiet and free. Practically all day we are out of doors, walking in the keen Winter winds, by the restless Winter sea. There are not many people on the Boardwalk. Not enough to interfere with the peace and grandeur of solitude. But just enough to suggest the outside world with all its stimulative possibilities. We do not return home to our little white hotel, until the flaming sunsets glow all over the wide January sky, and the silhouette of the Boardwalk perspective seems emerged in deepest purple, dotted with multicolored gleams of lamps and lanterns. I should love to paint an "Impression" at these scenes. Perhaps I shall some day. Now I must not. My

dear big bear of a physician ordered: "change of scene, change of air and absolute rest—" and I submit.

I am not even homesick for that little studio apartment in town and the half finished portraits that reproachfully, and très-ennuyés, stare against the wall. But when I return, I want to work so eagerly! I shall have to, in fact. What a blessing it is, to have to earn one's living. It keeps our thoughts centered on realities . . . and us out of the insane asylum.

5.

In the evenings, when my Boy is asleep, I sometimes do wish for New York. For some pleasant man friend to drop in and chat—on one or another "modern" subject, in one or another foreign language—dearest of all my own precious Viennese Jargon. It is so refreshing! Here in this little hotel everything is, of course, strictly American. And not the intense, keen type of American. All these men and women plainly show the hall-marks of mediocrity. "Tediously middle-class" to speak with Oscar Wilde. But then—I have my books! my Epictetus—(Hélas! I myself am nothing of a stoic. That is why I adore the stoics so!) my Goethe (he to me is, what the Bible was to many) and my Spinoza (who hides his beautiful sweet wisdom in such hard, stiff, thorny shells). These three are the deep, sonorous, majestic chords that give dignity to the glittering medley of my library. Against this royal background glows the jeweled tracery of d'Annunzio, Heine (ever ready with sneers to mask his tears), old Omar of the wine and roses, and Verlaine (whose life was so crude, and whose song is so sweet!)—the brilliant arabesque of Pierre Louys, Ovid (more Parisian than any Parisian), Lucian and Hofmannsthal—and other beautiful ones, whom I claim as friends and intimates.

Truly, human friends are not as indispensable as one pretends. If you have Epictetus to teach you, Goethe to lead you, Madame de Sevigné to gossip with, Dean Swift to brilliantly shock you, and Schnitzler to whisper of love—there is your salon! This is your circle. These are the friends who never misunderstood, never are preoccupied, and neves intrude. After all, what are your so-called congenial friends? The women who are almost rivals—the men who are almost lovers. And when you feel too weary to either compete or allure . . . you would soon be left quite alone, if it were not for your books!

6.

To-day, while we were walking on the Boardwalk, my Boy and I, a man was wheeled by us—a man who looked strangely like mon Ami. For a moment my heart stopped beating. Was it really he . . .? Of course, chance—Fate—God—might bring him to Atlantic City as well as us! My first primitive impulse was to follow that rolling chair. And indeed, for a few paces I did. Then I checked myself. If he wishes to see me, he can easily trace me through friends in town. If he does not wish to see me, I shall not insist on being seen . . . But it quite disconcerts me, how this little fleeting suggestion of him stirred my whole heart. A contour of the cheek, a bend of the head, a flexion of the voice—any trifle that recalls him, seems enough to demolish in a moment the fortitude and peace I built up for myself so patiently for years.

And how—if it really were he? If he should know of my stay here? If he should send up his card to-night . . . in a few moments! How would I—how could I receive him? I only know one thing . . . whether you be good or bad, worthy or unworthy, mon Ami, it does not matter—for I love you—I love you—I love you. Is this contemptible—or sublime?

7.

I have taken my Boy to the merry-go-round this afternoon. It was about five o'clock. The purple shadows stretched out over the ocean, and in the shops the red and yellow lights

flashed up. The merry-go-round was aglow and aglitter with electric lamps and gilded trappings, and the music played a jubilant tune. My Boy's small body tingled with excitement and expectation. He selected the most gorgeously impossible animal to ride upon —a seamonster, all silver and glistening green. How proudly he mounted his fabulous steed! I stood, watching the glad whirl. And every time he passed by me in the confusion of color and light and sound, he waved his dear hand in the little brown mitten, and called to me some word of pleasure or endearment. Not one other child of the many present had this desire of having his mother intimately share his joy. Oh, you well-behaved respectabilities! You make a motherhood as dry and gray and legitimately commonplace, as you have made love.

8.

This morning, as I stood before the mirror brushing my hair, I suddenly noticed a pale silver gleam among the tangles of russet and red. The famous first white hair! So hackneyed an object—and still how new, how significant, when it confronts yourself. Like love, it is a story that never grows old, this tragedy of growing old! and I —am I now growing old?

It must be a mournful time for woman when fading begins. When the "subtle halftones of experience" deepen into sharply defined lines of suffering. When one's outward self no longer will express the fire and beauty and power within. Indeed there are cases when blanched hair and a faded face are more of a lie than dyed hair and rouged cheeks. Why is it, that only when we begin to fade, do we realize all the possibilities of our beauty? And now . . . am I beginning to fade . . .

After all, to fade is an experience. And experience is our most precious privilege. To accept ever new sensations, to penetrate ever new phases, to learn ever new truths—this alone is life! And the splendour of life—this encountering of ever new difficulties without, this discovering of ever new resources within. Clearly, joy and grief are essentially the same: tests of our strength, opportunities for our development, each carrying twofold possibilities—of enslaving and crushing, or enriching and liberating our spirit. And there is no joy greater than the wild unearthly joy in the power of our own triumphant spirit, in the will that allows mind and soul to develop, to expand and exult—no matter what our body may be.

9.

Mrs. F., a friend of mine from New York, has come here to spend a week or two at our little white hotel. My Boy and I were delighted to greet her. It is such pleasure to see a friend, a representative of one's own circle of intimates, a participant in one's own little round of joy and grief, among strangers and in a strange environment. Mrs. F. is a woman perhaps ten years older than myself, brunette, comely, vigorous, full of la belle humeur and la joie de vivre. It is good to have her near.

Strange that this woman who is so happily married and adores her husband, this woman of strong passions and healthy sensuousness, should have chosen not to have any children. I cannot understand. When I love a man, I desire to reproduce him in all the beauty and glory in which he descended upon my life. Love to me is holy because it creates life—Life—free, proud and wonderful, to immortalize the ecstacy of my love! But she, so full of vitality, always preaching the gospel of activity —she denies herself this supreme experience. She is content to look on, to abstain . . . Eh bien—it probably is her instinct, her subconscious intelligence, that warns her from undertaking something which evidently would not be in harmony with her nature. As she is, she is well completed.

10.

Those auction shops on the Boardwalk are quite unique. Tall, dim rooms,

hung with strangely figured gobelins, richly colored rugs, and clusters of oddly shaped lamps. Crowded with eccentric carvings and exotic embroideries, with curious bronzes and precious vases, with Asiatic robes and ancient jewelry, and queer idols of malachite and jasper. The air there is warm and heavy, faintly scented with oriental incense and sandal wood—and some more occidental perfumes, exhaled by the gowns and veils of the women of many types, who sit in listless rows, languidly submitting to the auctioneer's rauque, rapid, rattle.

My Boy and I often stop in the doors of these shops, to enjoy their many-hued charm, and incidentally to warm ourselves, after some long walk in the lusty Winter winds. But we never had taken an active part in the proceedings.

Mrs. F., however, in this instance, would not content herself with being merely an on-looker. She began to examine, and choose, and discard. And finally she decided upon an elaborate piece of Japanese tapestry, richly woven in a fanciful design of white cranes and grayish reeds, on a ground of shining blue silk. It was taken down. And behind it, quite dusty and disgraced, I discovered a portrait of Oscar Wilde. Mrs. F. and the auctioneer did not pay any attention to it and went to the center of the store with their cranes. My Boy and I, we lingered behind. And I looked the portrait in the face.

It was a posteresque attempt, probably an "impression"—after the essence of the poet's individuality has been assimilated by the artist. And subtly mysteriously suggested, it was all there—from Dorian Grey to de Profundis. All the possibilities of physical enjoyment and spiritual suffering, of cruelty and martyrdom. It was all there—the "romantic olive-colored face of worn expression—the slumberous brown agate eye—the cool white flower-like hand" . . . the whole superb, illfated creature de luxe.

Could he have been so exquisite artistically, if he had been less fragile morally? Morals! They are for the Big Herd. The aristocracy of genius and brains is ruled by ethics and esthetics. But you? Wreathed with roses and escorted by little winged loves—you drove your sun chariot into the morass. "Let us taste from every tree in the garden of life," your motto, splendid and treacherous. Rare fruits and strangely fragrant flowers were the exquisite poison that, instead of stimulating you to greatest activity lulled you into the opium slumbers of corruption. Still . . . was not the tragedy of your life your supreme success, artistic as well as ethical?

11.

I cannot bear to hear my Boy's father criticised by my friends. No doubt they do so out of loyalty to me. . . . They mean well, but the acts that our friends "mean well" are invariably the most stupid ones of all. Some wounds will never heal. All we can do is to shield them from our friends' profaning touch and eyes. If only they were not so anxious to examine these very ones.

Bienaimé! I do not listen to these people. I love you. I love you as you are. And the less perfect we are—the more we need to be loved. It is not so? I love you . . . And since I cannot have the happiness of knowing you faithful to me, I can at least have the happiness of being faithful to you. This happiness is mine alone to guard or to lose. Mon Ami you cannot rob me of this! I hold fast to this last small shred of bitter happiness . . . And some day you may need me and the Child. Then you shall not call in vain.

12.

Oh, I have la Nostalgie de l'Amour! I am the primitive woman—without love I die.

Love! you are fate itself, dealing out life and death. You are Astarte and Moloch in one, the beginning and end of all creation. Like a glowing god you walk among humanity. They whom you pass by—they live but half. And

they whom you touch—are glorified or scorched to cinders.

Oh, Love—what have you done to me! I was a flower half opened—and you withered me. I was a song of joy just begun—and you crushed me into silence. I was adorned, eager for the banquet of life—and you tore the roses from my hair, and dashed the goblet from my hand, and spilled the glowing wine of my youth . . . leaving me bereft, in tears and terror.

And still I worship before you! I know you are holy. They who call you "pleasure" do not understand you. They do not know the wild and mystic, the sacrificial rapture that seizes those who sob in your embrace. For unless we will pay the price of our life and blood we can never enter the supreme Nirvana of Love.

13.

"To conquer an unfortunate attachment makes the man stronger—it may be for evil, it may be for good" . . . Bulwer says this somewhere, in "Eugene Aram," I believe. When I studied "Literature" with my German governess, I came across it, and copied it into my little "Treasure book," where it stands unabashed between utterances of Schiller and Molière. Its pride and strength always appealed forcibly to me. There seemed such a note of defiance in it, clear and victorious as a clarion call.

And now? It means nothing to me. To conquer, to vanquish love . . . seem terms without meaning, silly frivolities that pretend to play with the chains of an immovable doom. For I have found my Master. As long as I live I shall be his slave—less than his slave—a poor torn-off, bleeding, suffering part of him. The loves that came before are as though they never had been. And none possibly can come after. I am humiliated into the dust. I sob with utter shame. After every memory of love has been defiled, I still adore him . . . It only needs one look of my Boy's eyes, dark and sorrowful as his father's, and all the infamy is forgotten, there remains nothing but the great flaming love, eager to sacrifice itself a hundred times over again.

Ah! I ought to have lived in pre-Raphaelite times, when Griseldis set the fashion. What place have years of mourning and unsolicited faithfulness in the twentieth century? This love is an absurdity. It smothers my youth—it mutilates my life—it stifles the blinds! I want to be free again! Love is for little maids who believe in saintly things. Pour nous auters, the joy of life and power triumphant! The play with fire and spirit—the danger of the battle royal—the delirium of victory—the strength to make an end! Ah, you should be satisfied to let the episode remain an episode. Do not insist on being the woman who stays—be la dame qui passe. . . .

14.

Women exaggerate the importance of marriage. It is nothing but an incident. You remain the same being, complete in yourself, that you had been before. There is no such thing as "finding your other half." We are much too complex to find in one man all the qualities corresponding to our own. If your lover, to you, is erotically perfect, what else would you have? You must choose among other men the one to join you in finely intelligent camaraderie, the one whose mental qualities have power to stimulate, the one to follow the fight of your ambition, or the caprices of your fancy.

The more individuality women develop, the more unhappy marriages there will be. Indeed, how can we expect our husbands to understand us—we, who do not understand ourselves! We are sphinxes, unable to solve our own riddles. Our qualities and characteristics are subtly intangible, changing color and texture under one5s very eyes. Our keenest pleasures masquerade as sacrifices. Our deepest disappointments are veiled in glittering gayety. Knowing our power, we smile the meek little smile of humility, and, as we succumb, are triumphant. There is no

truth in a true woman! You cannot grasp us. You do not know, are we beautiful, or do we only beguile you? Our smile is more adorable than our mouth. Our glance more victorious than our eye. Our movement more seductive than our form. What we are, forever overruled by how we are it.

My dear Pedant. You cannot classify us. There is no Madonna without her possibilities of the Magdalen, Hélas! We can be both at the same time. . . .

I sometimes wonder why it is, that every bit of my being longs for the return of mon Ami. Is it the Madonna or the Magdalen in me that cries for him? Perhaps neither. An imp, a demon, whispers into my ear, that I wish for his return . . . so I may be cured of my love.

15.

I have become conscious of a new dramatis personæ in my Boy's life.

During the brief times that we daily spend with the other guests in the sun-parlor my Boy became acquainted with a young priest, for whom he now suddenly has taken quite a violent fancy. The priest is convalescing from some grave illness. He looks like a fitting companion for my Boy—kind and manly, with well modeled head and young, bright eyes. First I only acknowledged this friendship with a bow or passing word. But now I occasionally talk to him. In fact he joins us as soon as we enter the sun-parlor. Glimpses of two very different worlds are revealed in our short chats. It is like a game of curious surprises, and pleasantly interrupts my isolation here.

16.

Books have a strange power over me. When they appeal to me at all, they appeal so forcibly, that for the time being my whole individuality is lost, melted into the author's. There is a langurous delight in this weakness, this abandon to a more vital spirit—which for a brief time masters me, quickening qualities and emotions that had slumbered within me, and leaving me richer and more individualized than I had been before. I am now reading Cellini's Autobiography in Goethe's translation. What a rich, pulsating, vivid life was his! With what concentration and enthusiasm he did his work. With what sublime arrogance he fought his battles. With what superb intensity he loved his loves. How perfectly he understood the art of making an end—so infinitely more difficult than making a beginning! In the darkness of the mouldy dungeon of Rome, as in the glory of the resplendent court of Paris, he was always the same, always himself, absolute, positive, self-reliant, self-asserting. There is no trace of problematic subtleties or sentimentalities. He is thoroughly male. His opinion of women is most characteristic. In his eyes all young women are harlots, all old women entremetteuses. And after all, these are the arts in which we excel. He certainly is not beset with illusions! All is red-blooded reality with him. How poor and gray our hysteric meagerness seems, compared to such richness of life and art. And my own life! what a frail, shadowy web, spun out of tears and dreams—compared to his gorgeous royal robe, brocaded in the gold of activity, and studded with flaming jewels of success.

17.

"S'il n'y avait pas, dans l'exercice d'ecrire, un certain charme—souvent douloureux, parfois enivrant, presque toujouis irresistible—je pense qu'on n'aurait jamais le courage d'ecrire sur soi-meme."

These words of George Sand's could well serve as motto or apology for every woman's journal. It does indeed take courage to meet the world's eyes—critical, cold, sneering. And our journals no longer are written as self mirrorings only. There is the ever present craving that others should partake in this viewing of our self, should behold the image that we allow to be reflected without veil or masque . . . though perhaps half consciously posed in an attitude to satisfy our artistic tact.

We are all Marie Bashkirtseffs. De-

livering up our most intimate and sacred thoughts to the discretion of the public, that coarse, thousandheaded Monster of Mediocrity. Still, among those thousands of heads, there must be two or three—thoughtful, subtle, exquisite, moulded by knowledge and suffering . . . You, you are the ones to whom we wish to give the perfume of our souls, the essence of our lives. And for your sake the others are admitted.

Hélas! No woman writer who is not an intellectual harlot. And hélas! No woman with an adorable lover, who would ever care to write. Who would not rather spend herself in living and loving than in writing or painting. . . . What is woman's art, anyhow? A makeshift, a substitute, a faute-de-mieux! The effort to express in a minor language the moods and emotions she is not allowed to express in the sublime language. Unlike man, woman will always cherish love above art. It is supreme art.

18.

When I was a girl I felt such utter contempt for the woman who flirts! In those positive days I either loved a man fanatically, or did not care for him at all. As in primitive art, there were but light and shadow, clearly defined, with a total absence of half tones. It is only when we grow more mature, that we learn to perceive the charm of nuances and the value of elusive mezzotints. We learn to comprehend how dry and meager life would be, if it consisted only of gross, self evident, readily discernible facts. And among other exquisitely futile things, we begin to appreciate the charm of "flirt"—those gossamer threads of sympathy! Too fragile to bear anything as heavy as a duty or responsibility. But splendidly strong enough to unite two natures for the short moments they are tuned in perfect harmony with each other—and to beautify two lives with the silver and opal glitter of their lacelike fairy network. . . .

I like to talk with my Boy's friend, the priest. Though I call him "father," I know he is but a boy, with ardent boyish thoughts and ambitions under his closely cropped red curls. And still not a boy. His richly curved almost luscious mouth is firmly compressed. Somehow about it there is the suggestion of a strong thing in leash.

Flirt! How curious a thing it is, worthy of a less frivolous name. How it sharpens our appreciation of life's ephemeral values, and makes keen our perception of the invisible. It is marvelous how many things there are in life that one can clearly discern without a word to tell of them, without a tremor to betray them. They penetrate us in a luminous, intangible way. And we know beyond a doubt they have come—they are here.

19.

To me the ocean is a great conscious presence whom I love and who loves me. He speaks to me in the ever changing beauty of his colors and moods. I understand the playful song of his sunny little waves and the wild, mournful melody of his furious breakers. To me he is the most majestic, the most mystic spectacle on this planet—eternity materialized.

I cannot speak of the ocean as "it." He seems a personality. Near him I feel in the atmosphere of one beloved. Vibrations of elemental sympathy course from him through me. His breath gives me new life. And his infinite restless restfulness to my wounds is a balm of heaven. Great, wonderful Ocean! When I go back into the town of the swarming little people, I shall take thy precious gifts with me, and thy resplendent memory as the pledge, that sometime in the far away future, when my Boy no longer shall need me—you will claim me for the Last Embrace.

20.

Heavy and black, the clouds of depression have been closing over me for days. I know these periods of gloom very well. They always recur from time to time. And while they last everything seems to have significance only in

relation to my sorrow. Now, to make matters worse, a Happy Family has come to this hotel. A very ordinary, underbred, and over-dressed mother, father, little boy, and baby girl. They have the table next to ours. And actually, I am afraid to go into the dining room! It makes me feel such an utter beggar to see the spectacle of their happiness and devotion. To see the young father carefully lift the little boy upon his chair and wait upon him with such proud tenderness . . . as my boy has never known from his father. To see the pretty wife smile into her husband's eyes with such beaming trust and love and perfect contentment . . . as I never knew with mon Ami. Oh, the soft mellow laughter of secure happiness! Oh, to be united with the father of one's child—the holy Trinity of Love!

If this little middle-class couple with its conventional middle-class love can shed such heavenly radiance about them, what a glorification of life would our love have been, with all its brilliant resources, and richness of temperament. . . . Enough! He may have found a woman more lovable than I am. And, as for him, could not he have been successfully supplanted by any of my friends? Ah! had he been only a lover, I would have forgotten him long ago. But he is the father of my child—there lies the magic of his spell.

21.

My soul swings as a pendulum between the worship of the sublime and the yielding to the frivolous. I am nothing but a reed before the wind, a broken flower petal driven by the wind, going whither the wind wills. . . . In all the volatileness of my ever changing moods there is only one thing I can seize as my real substances, ever the same, undoubted, and unshaken—my love for my Boy.

Dear, beautiful child of passion! You are the only rock of rest for that tremulous seabird, the heart of your mother. Dear Boy, with eyes as the velvet of dark butterflies, what shall your life be? God grant that you be finer and greater than your father and mother. That yours be a happier life! Not perhaps happy in that you always have what you want, but happy that you always possess the strength to act in harmony with your inner laws of truth and beauty and freedom.

Now I still am your providence. Your precious childhood I hold within my hands. Do I fill it with sunshine and peace? Your golden soul is within my keeping. Do I lead it towards the light? The time will come when you outgrow my leadership. Then I shall know if in motherhood I have failed as miserably as I failed in love.

Dear Little One. Shall I ever be able to make restitution for all the joy and happiness your precious life gives me? When I look into your clear face, all the world seems bright and good. When I see life with your eyes, all complications are simplified, all blurred values restored to pristine clearness. You are the magnet, my Boy, that points the way out of all bewilderment and darkness. As long as I have you, I must not complain.

22.

The priest lives in number two, the room next to ours. Yesterday evening while I was downstairs, at supper, my Boy, being alone in bed upstairs, became frightened. It seems there were unusual noises in the heating apparatus and he feared an "explosement." He frantically called and knocked at the wall. The priest happened to be in his room, and came to his little friend's rescue.

When I returned to our room after supper, I found a woebegone little brown boy, dejectedly curled up in a little heap among the pillows. Bending over him protectingly, was the tall, broad figure of a man . . . Mon Ami! It must be mon Ami! I stopped short in the door, my heart hammering with sudden, wild, delirious joy—then the priest looked up. And all the bitter irony of my fate smote me in the face.

The priest saw my confusion. He

turned very pale. And left the room without a word.

And I! The tears streamed down my face, while I tried to quiet my Boy, to put him to sleep. And as my lips formed soothing baby words, my soul cried out in anguish and agony. Oh! Mon Ami! Why did you not kill me when you ceased to love me? It would have been bliss to receive death from your beautiful, beloved hands! You would have spared me the misery of all these bitter years. You would have spared my child the misery of having to come into this bitter life. Oh! why did you not murder me—it would have been far less cruel than leaving me.

23.

I have a friend up in Minneapolis. A man whom I never met, except through his letters. He is originally a friend of mon Ami's . . . Mon Ami had a very high opinion of this man's integrity and sterling qualities. This prompted me to first write him, years ago, when everything seemed to totter about me, to vanish from under my feet. And in him I really found a Man, sound, strong, and sincere. Ever since that first letter, I have gone to him when I was in need of a brave word of encouragement, a firm word of advice. And I have never gone in vain.

To him I went again last night. I wrote a long, mad, impossible letter—begging, beseeching him for just one word, one word about mon Ami! Why I do not know whether he is alive or dead! Has he found the happiness he sought away from me? And was it happiness he sought? Sometimes I think it would be a consolation to know he is happy with another woman, a beautiful, precious woman. And then again I feel I could bear this last of all. Still—to know is better than to fear. This darkness, this utter silence is hell. Perhaps he is ill. In deep trouble. Oh! if he needed me . . . all should be well again! I would fly to him, kiss the adored suffering mouth and poor transparent hands, bring him home to life and love. . . .

Fool that I am. He would not even recognize me. Not know which one of his many playthings that was, crushing her lips against his mouth and bathing his fever with her tears. In his consciousness there can be only a vague composite portrait of all these women, a soulless creature of many graces. What may she have of me? Perhaps the long red hair. Perhaps the caresses of my white fingers. Surely not my love.

I destroyed that letter. It must be all over. I must forget. I must tear all memory out of my heart. My heart shall be filled only with the love of my son. God! How is it possible to love the son and forget the father. . . .

It is only the twelfth of March. But the air is full of spring, the wind warm and caressing, the whole atmosphere charged with restlessness and desire. Spring—the time of youth and love! How full of cruel bitterness for one who has lost both.

All day long my Boy and I were sitting in the sunny sands. The ocean was blue and glittering. The sky without a cloud in its radiance. My Boy felt like a little wild colt, out in open freedom. He ran against the wind, his coat loosened, his brown, bushy hair flying about the eager face. He threw himself down upon the sand, and rolled his pretty body, and kicked up his strong, small legs, and laughed with wild, jubilant delight. "Spring is here, spring is here, Mother! I feel it all through my blood!"

My beautiful Boy, with his dark eyes, lovely and amorous as a summer night. With his tawny skin fragrant as almond's milk and white hyacinths. . . . How clearly I remember the time when I was small as he. When spring thrilled me, as it now thrills him. Long ago, in a far-away garden, an ardent little girl, looking at life's strangely mysterious possibilities with an Eve-like, luxuriously anticipating curiosity. . . . Little Eve, with the mystic malachite eyes. If only you had not eaten the apple. You might yet be in paradise. Still . . . what is paradise without the apple!

24.

Oscar Wilde is right when he ridicules "That awful memory of woman." It is absurd self-torture. Why must I recall the glowing reds, the flaming sapphire blues and deep, passionate purples of other days, when I am adrift upon a shoreless sea of neutral grey. . . .

Seven years ago, that night of March! Why should it be resurrected so vividly that I can feel once more all its keen, starry clearness of winter, all its tremulous balmy promise of spring. . . . My little white hotel chamber has vanished. Around me are the rich, mellow tints of the wide studio. Through large windows looms the glaringly illumined vision of Madison Square at night. And by my side stands he, who showed me the radiance of life's greatest treasures, only to tear them out of my grasp forever. With lips on fire and eyes in tears I lived once more through the whole heart-breaking farce.

Oh, mon Ami! mon Ami! Can you not hear me, can you not feel me, can I not reach you through darkness and distance? Oh, the awful stillness. The bitter, burning despair. The horrible solitude. Oh, to be comforted, to be loved!

Love . . . love? . . . Oh, mon Ami, you taught me the horror of it! You killed my faith, you broke my life. . . . Oh, love left a bitter, bitter taste upon my lips. . . .

Next door I heard the restlessly regular pacing of well-known footsteps—up and down, up and down, as I had heard them many a night. It was almost a consolation. There also was a human being struggling with love. I was not quite alone, not quite forsaken. There was a man who thought of me, who yearned for me—there was love waiting to clasp me. . . .

A sudden furious frenzy seized me—I threw a dressing-gown over my shoulders, and stepped out of the door. . . .

It was very late.

The hall that divides the whole length of the little white hotel lay empty and still. The lights were low. The transoms were dark. Only in number two there was a dim light, and the sound of those restless footsteps came wearily from the carpeted floor.

For a moment I paused, leaning against the wall. Then my hand touched the knob. The door opened from within. And the priest stood before me.

He was still all dressed, even to the stiff clerical collar. But his face looked as I had never seen it before, troubled, haggered, wild eyed. He stared at me as though I were a thing not of this world. Neither of us could utter a word. My knees trembled. I thought I should faint. He stretched out his hand to support me. His grasp closed over my arm. Then he pulled me to himself—his eyes burnt into mine, his lips uttered words one cannot understand—and his mouth found my mouth in a sobbing kiss of love and terror. The flames of oblivion closed over us.

The pale grayness of a chill dawn crept across the window shades. I stood before my Boy, where he lay asleep in beauty and innocence. His brown face tinged with the glow of a rose, his little white teeth showing in the crimson smile of his dreams. I touched his small hand, and its dark fingers closed over my pale fingers. And, still asleep, he whispered lovingly "Mother." I sank to my knees and buried my face in his pillow. . . .

Now only is my misery complete.

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN GEORGE BERNARD SHAW AND THE DICTIONARY

By Benjamin de Casseres

SCENE: *The Interior of Shaw's Ego*

G. B. S.—Yes, my dear Dictionary, you are my real paramour. Through you I have been enabled to take the written thoughts of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche and turn them into mere words, which people buy.

THE DICTIONARY.—Yes, George, you rearrange me very good. I feel quite "sloppy" after you use me.

G. B. S.—Words! Words are the secret of thought and action. In the world there is nothing but words. Without words life could not be. Men only die when speech gives out and because the power of speech gives out. Sound exists to be incarnated in words. Look at the Speech from the Throne. Ideals rove around the brain only for the purpose of finding their verbal bodies and getting born through the mouth. There is no deeper meaning to a thing than the definition of the word that expresses that thing. From Plato to Me what we call literature has been nothing but a rearrangement of words. Hamlet, Falstaff, Lear and Faust were invented by their authors for getting rid of the words that obsessed them. D'Annunzio says that he reads nothing but dictionaries. So did Gautier and Hugo.

Words are cesspools of whole cycles. Words are Louvres, Alhambras, Pantheons, Catacombs, Mammoth Caves and mausoleums. Words embody the genius of races and the aspirations of the dead. If I knew by heart all the dictionaries of all languages I could write all the masterpieces of prose and poetry that are to come for the next two million years. We all have the vision, but few have the words. There are very stupid persons that are geniuses for one minute or ten minutes in their whole lives. In those ten minutes, had they the words ready, they might write "The Hound of Heaven" or "Kubla Khan."

THE DICTIONARY.—Go to it, kid!

G. B. S.—Thrice blessed be abracadabra! The ancient forest incantations were full of meaning. The modern political and religious incantations are as meaty. From all time we have lived in a logocracy. With words I can summon ghosts, devils or overturn the established church. "It sounds fine, but means nothing"—that was uttered by Commonsense, never by a poet. Words have no higher use than to sound fine, create music or evoke the absurd. As to the last, look at me, my dear Dic. The greatest short poem in the English language—in my way of thinking—is Poe's "Ulalume." A divine jingle! The poem is the esoteric X of music. Why spoil the hallucinating grandeur of the English language by writing the obvious in hundreds of pages as Milton did when one can write that word Ulalume? Since that "blessed word Mesopotamia" was invented in order to force somebody to give it a local residence has there been such a word born in any language as Ulalume?

Stéphane Mallarmé knew, like Poe,

the secret properties in words. His poems mean nothing to the lettered collegiate ear. It is only the American nation that can read them. They are not words, but palimpsests; sound laid over sound; evocation buried under evocation. To understand one of Mallarmé's poems would take the average intelligent mind a hundred years. Each word is a giant retort wherein are consumed a hundred dictionaries to produce a vaporous thread wherein the average mind can see nothing. Mallarmé's volatilized Littré, Larousse and the Dictionary of the Academy. He began where the French language ended. Symphonies were in his raw material. Victor Hugo was only one of his ingredients. He was the Hegel of poetry.

It is only second- and third-rate men who rack their brains, as they call it, for plots, situations, poems, thoughts. When I want to think I empty my head and open the dictionary. When I desire to fly, I wing myself with a few magic words that I keep hidden like a precious amulet—presto! I am away with the gods, on Olympus; or threading my way through the Zodiac of Ideas still uncreate, or perched on the eyrie of the static. Now gayly contemplating the whirlpools and eddies on the time-ocean and the comic antics of the waterflies in pantaloons and hobble skirts.

Words, my dear Dic., words—they are the real time-machine. And there are no ideas; there are only words. The use of words should be a privilege of genius only. The herd should be taught to think, but should never be allowed to speak or write. I have written whole acts in order to frame a beautiful epigram or a word, each syllable of which was a ravine of marvelous etymological shadows or luminous stalactite or a raw dig.

It sometimes makes me weep, Dic., when I think of all the words in you that I cannot use because I have not the time to enshrine them in someone else's ideas. Our ideas we hold in common, but in the selection of words we publish our individuality. I am a logocrat and a logolept.

How I love those concatennated and cadenced sonorities of Hugo, the subliminal etymological morgues of Sir Thomas Browne and Robert Herrick, the voluptuous sentences of Renan and Barrès, the jewelled and luminous pavilions of Gautier, the frosty heavens of Stendhal, the cutthroat style of Nietzsche, the succulent poisons of Baudelaire and Maeterlinck, the secret panels of Henry James, the stupendous vortices of Ibsen's monosyllables, the Gothic miracles of Lafcadio Hearn, the musical, mystical reticence of Arthur Symons.

THE DICTIONARY.—Du hast Recht, Georg!



IN the year 1830 the average American had six children and one wife. How time changes all things!

BREVITY: the quality that makes cigarettes, sermons and ocean voyages bearable.

KISS: a proof that twice nothing is something.

IF all public questions were settled by shooting dice, fifty per cent. of them would be settled correctly. This would be five times as good a score as we make now.

THE majority always has its way in the end. So does the embalmer. But neither gains in pleasantness by the fact.

A FAIR WIND FROM THE FAR EAST

By Lee Pape

YOUNG Gladding, turning off Broadway into the narrow stairway that led almost vertically to the "Far East," had not yet admitted to himself that he was making this second visit merely to have another look at the girl with the braids.

Of course, he knew it. It was just that he had not yet admitted it. He was under no delusion that the decorative fascination of Chinese cookery was the magnet, nor the hybrid Americo-Chinese "atmosphere," nor yet the sallow tenor's rendering of "Take unto Yourself a Wife—But Whose?" He also knew that he should have been up to better things on this fifth night of his week's stop-over in New York.

Pushing past obtrusive waiters, he found a deserted table at the edge of the circular cabaret platform. The Far East was not crowded—it was comparatively early; scarcely midnight. An unwholesome-looking youth in olive street clothes, at full lung power, was singing "Your Mother Is Your Best Friend After All," to the accompaniment of a not-bad orchestra in a jutting balcony. Bored-looking men, sipping all the colors of the rainbow at surrounding tables, accorded the singer an occasional indifferent glance, as if out of respect for their feminine partners' obviously sympathetic interest.

The filial young man in olive, graciously construing the light patter of women's hands into a demand for more, obliged with two stentorian repetitions of the chorus, the orchestra, which had evidently not been quite so sure of the demand, catching up with him at the second bar. Then came a comparative lull of chinking tableware, loud conversation and sudden choruses of untempered laughter. A waiter with a pimpled face made Gladding squirm by placing a hand familiarly on his shoulder as he leaned over to get his order. Hastily picking up the long yellow menu card, Gladding let his finger stop at the first short and pronounceable item—chow main.

"What y' drinkin'?" inquired the waiter in an easy, friend-to-friend tone.

"Nothing," said Gladding, and shook the hand off his shoulder. Pimples leered at him a moment as though wondering whether to insult him with voice as well as eyes, and then shrugged off. . . . From a half-screened table opposite rose the inevitable quartette. Only this quartette was "mixed;" two men, our friend in olive and the sallow tenor, and two women. No, one woman; one oppressively décolleté, overly rouged, too glaringly evident woman—and the girl with the braids.

The orchestra struck up, and now, in his sudden sharp disgust at her surroundings, Gladding was willing to confess unreservedly that she had brought him there. Wedged in with those other three, her tastefully simple white gown, with just a red rose at the girdle, her faultless complexion and wide blue eyes, crying youth! in a wilderness of artificiality, her braids — the thick, glossy-brown braids, twined with simple art to set off the shapeliness of her head, again struck him as an unpardonable crime of misplacing. His musician's sense of harmony was disturbed as though by one perfect bar amidst utter discord. She couldn't be more than eighteen!

"A flower choked in weeds," he

thought, and stared at her, wondering, fascinated. His impression of the preceding night was renewed, verified. . . . she was a wonderfully good-looking girl of the type that his nature most quickly responded to.

When the song was over he realized that he hadn't the faintest notion of what it was all about, only that it was out of all reason noisy and gestureful (his girl with the braids alone maintaining a cool repression) and that the orchestra had based the accompaniment on a sort of drum motif. It seemed to be an Italian orchestra of real musicians; Gladding was filled with compassion at the thought of what they were suffering at the hands of a fate that made noble violins vassals to a jester drum.

An uproariously demanded encore, another comparative lull, and then the girl with the braids ascended the platform alone and sang "Rosebuds Mean You." In spite of something about the lyrics which suggested that the writer was destined never to become a Tennyson, it was a sincerely conceived little song, simply, prettily sung. This time it was the men rather than the women whose faces showed appreciation, rousing man applause that called the singer back to toss rosebuds as she repeated the chorus. Gladding wondered whether her young beauty stirred pity as well as admiration in the breasts of that stolid, drinking crowd. A fragile flower stifled in rank weeds! The figure stuck . . . At the table next to Gladding's, a great hulk of a fellow, half drunk and drinking alone, was slouched down in his chair, squinting up at her with fishy, desirous eyes.

As she concluded she seemed for the first time to become aware of Gladding's intent gaze. She looked down at him, and smiled. Not a professionally casual, stereotyped, bought-and-paid-for showing of teeth, but a really human, friendly smile, as just such a blue-eyed lass might flash over her father's hedge-rows at some grateful, trudging stranger in the dusty roads of Gladding's own Iowa. It was like a breath of evening air over sun-baked hills.

Then something happened. The leering boozer at the next table lurched to his feet and stumbled to the platform.

"You f'r me!" he cried, and had one foot up.

Simultaneously, the girl started back and Gladding sprang. Two lean, strong hands smacked on the fellow's shoulders, and immediately, as if by magic, he was revolving back toward his table like a drunken top. For a moment he swung swaying over his chair, then, with an irresistible yank, Gladding sat him down so hard that something seemed to give way, either in the chair or the fellow's backbone. . . . It wasn't until Gladding saw the empty platform that he realized the round of applause in which he had returned to his table had been for him.

Without protest, the disturber of the peace accompanied two heavy waiters to a door marked "Exit." Gladding sat there a while, blushingly embarrassed, feeling eyes on him long after he and his exploit had been forgotten. Finally, after failing to find peace of mind in the complexities of his chow main, he rose and walked with forced leisure to the doorway (the waiter had been paid, in accordance with the foresighted C. O. D. system that prevailed at the Far East). He had seen the girl again—what more did he expect? He had no business there anyway.

At the entrance to the alley of palms that screened the operations of the checking-room highwaymen, he felt a light touch on his arm.

"Thank you," said the girl with the braids.

"Oh," said Gladding. . . . "Not at all." And, after a pause, "Won't you—sit down?" He was really very young, and not at all bold.

She sat opposite him at a little isolated table behind the palms, her blue eyes taking him in with frank interest. And at these close quarters it thrilled him to see that they were truly of the purest blue imaginable, serene, unclouded, steady. And the whites of

them were clear. No, she couldn't be more than, well, at most, twenty.

"I've never seen it done more neatly," she said.

"You've seen it done, then," Gladding hazarded curiously, "often?"

"Well, this isn't my first cabaret job, by several, and strong drink is raging, and men are men."

"Some aren't." Gladding thought of the beast who had after all brought about their meeting. "Do you think of all men in terms of that fellow?"

"All with drink in them."

"Then, thank God, I don't drink."

"You should."

His eyebrows went up.

"Thank God," she explained.

"I don't drink," a certain insistent honesty led him to go on, "mainly, I suppose, because I hate the taste of the stuff."

"Then don't give it a chance. It'll remember that—like a woman—and when it finally gets you it'll make you love it to death."

"Why, that sounded—old!" he marveled, and hastened on, "Do you know how you impressed me while you were singing up there? Like a flower trying to grow among vile weeds. Pardon me, but everything else here is so insufferable, and you are so fresh and young."

"Oh! My whole family thanks you." (George M. Cohan was only a name to him.) "I love compliments from nice old gentlemen. You must be all of twenty-one!"

"Twenty-three," said Gladding, and blushed—the blood rushed to his good-looking face at embarrassingly small provocation—insisting, "But I meant it—every word. Oh, if you knew how I hate the vulgar, feverish pretending of this New York! Old women with girls' clothes and ghastly rouged faces—drinking, dancing old men! All trying to claw back the youth that they probably disguised while they had it—just as the little girls now dress and walk and talk like their big sisters, the big sisters that pass in the streets with frozen faces, afraid to smile for fear it will make them look too young. . . . I swear you are the first wholly natural girl I have met in New York."

"Why," she said, wonderingly, "I really believe you do mean it. It seems so strange, actually meaning what you say up here. Welcome to our city. You can't have been here long."

"Five days, and day-after-to-morrow I go back to West Falls, Iowa."

"You don't look like that, somehow. I mean like a traveling man. What's your line?"

"I'm not a traveling man. I've been studying music in Europe. I was lucky enough to win a Paris Conservatoire scholarship."

"Oh! Young Mr. Highbrow! But say, as a musician, what did you think of my song? It's so hard, you know, to get something you're not ashamed to look in the face after you've sung it. *That,* for instance!"

The sallow tenor was throwing his sallow soul into the profane song of the moment:

. . . "But whose? But whose?
My friends all have such charming wives
It is so hard to choose!"

Gladding shuddered.

"Do you ever write anything—popular?" she said.

"Like *that?*"

"Oh, no. Like, say, 'Rosebuds Mean You.' Or do you only do—symphonies and things?"

"Several years ago," he mused, "a friend of mine wrote some verses and I put them to music. Your song reminded me of them, a little. Perhaps because of the title; they were called, 'The Rose Is the Flower of Love.'"

"Was it published?"

"Published? No!"

"Well, don't get mad about it. Would it have been beneath you to have it published?"

"I wouldn't say that. Only, you see, it was a mere trifle—I think I did it in an afternoon, and I could hardly think

of publishing anything so—well, unambitious."

She looked at him for a thoughtful moment, studied him with lips pursed and eyes partly veiled. Her small, firm hands were on the table edge, fingers intertwined. It was a fascinating pose, perfectly unconscious, and under it Gladding felt his ready blush advertise that it thrilled him.

"I never heard of anyone making money out of symphonies," she said, slowly.

"No one does," he replied.

"Oh, well, sufficient unto the day is your own business thereof. I won't butt in." She glanced at the platform, where the under-dressed, over-painted woman was looking over at them with composed expressionlessness while the orchestra was striking up the overture to her song. "But the best of friends must part. Claire Le Roy is going to sing 'Pull Down the Shades' and they'll be wanting me for the chorus."

"Claire Le Roy! I could have guessed it. Now your name—it's nothing like that, I know. Do you mind telling me?"

"Waters. June Waters."

She made as if to rise, and suddenly he reached over and caught hold of her hands, speaking quickly.

"June Waters! That's more than a name—it's you, yourself! I must see you again—please. Let me show you the song we spoke of. I'll try to remember it and write it out for you on some manuscript paper and bring it to you tomorrow."

Her steady gaze dropped to the hands that had remained quietly captive in his.

"You're a nice boy," she said, and, freeing her hands, gave his own a slight pressure, and rose.

"You're June Waters," he said, and rose, too. His voice was not so steady as he might have wished it. "I won't wait. I hate to see you—with those people. I'll bring the song."

"I want to see it." She smiled, showing not too much of perfect white teeth. . . .

He reported quite early the next evening with the words of the song and the accompaniment, and she came and sat with him at the little detached table during her rest intervals. The contrasting simplicity of her appearance was even more striking; still white, but with a sash of cool blue about her waist. She was frankly enthusiastic over the song, which he hummed for her while she held the manuscript and nodded her head at the words.

"It's big enough to go to work," she told him. "You should have it published."

He shook his head.

"You may keep it for your own, to sing, if you like. In fact, I—I rather think I'd like you to. I've been thinking a lot about you since last night. You don't believe that, do you?"

"Not usually."

"Well, you may this time. And if I told you I was here the night before last, and that I came back last night merely to see you again, you wouldn't believe that either, would you?"

She looked at him thoughtfully, with brows a little puckered beneath the low-coiled braids. A drawing he had seen somewhere flashed back to him, a picture of a girl graduate composing her commencement essay.

"I saw you here the night before last," she said.

"You—"

"Yes. The Far East is a haystack, and the hay is so dirty I can see the needles. You're not exactly a Far East type, you know."

"Then," he said, eagerly, "you *do* believe me! And you'll let me say how it hurts me to see you here—doing this work, penned in this terrible atmosphere like—like—"

"A flower among weeds?"

"Oh, I know other men must have talked like this to you, but you *must* see that I absolutely mean every word. I tell you I haven't been able to get you out of my mind—your voice, something about your eyes, a certain way you have of saying things. Look, I intended to

go home tomorrow, but I think I can stay on a little longer—I'm sure I can. If I manage it, why can't we—will you—"

"Will I come and play with you if you're allowed out?" She tapped thoughtfully on the table with her finger tips. "Oh, I—well, why not? I've thought of you since last night—a little."

"Oh, come!—really?"

"I'll prove it. See, I've got my eyes closed . . . Hair, dark brown and a little too long for New York, with a baby cowlick you're ashamed of and oughtn't to be—if I fell in love with you I'd probably start at the cowlick. . . . Eyes, darker brown with an illumination system you won't find lighting up Forty-second and Broadway. . . . Complexion, wasted on a man. . . . Tie—last night's tie—gray in diagonal bars." Her eyes opened and fell on the manuscript that had been lying flat between them, and suddenly the slight pucker returned to her brows as she again regarded him curiously. "Say, is there a—girl, in East Lake?"

"It's West Falls."

"Is there?"

"Why?"

"*Is* there?"

"Well—yes. There's a girl."

"And she wrote the words to this song?"

"Yes."

"Are you engaged to her?"

"No—that is, not in so many words.'

"Because none of the notes in highbrow music are dollar notes?"

"Something like that. But I say, listen—"

"*You* listen!" She swept an arm suddenly, almost passionately, towards the platform, where the two men performers, clowning as comic paper countrymen, were vociferating a "popular" song extolling the grossness and glitter of Broadway.

"Listen to that! I met the man who wrote that—he can sign his name without a mistake nine times out of ten! Isn't it a lovely dose to cram down their throats? But people are like babies; they remember their last rattle and they yell for another one just like it. Shut 'em up by forcing a rubber ball on them, and they'll cry for something to bounce until you shove a set of blocks at them. . . . Give these overgrown babies at the tables half a dozen good sentimental ballads, and they'll forget they ever heard of wine-and-women songs. They've had a push that way already. All they need now is a song to knock 'em over—yours, for instance. And you've got no right to refuse them. What would you think of a doctor who held back an antidote from a poisoned man because it was too easy to mix? Well, you've been forced into the position of a doctor, and all these people have poisoned their sense of decency and need your antidote. And you go on mixing highbrow cocktails for stiff-backed yawners in opera chairs to go to sleep over!"

Gladding shook his head, but he was impressed and thinking hard.

"You owe it to her—the girl that wrote the words. Half of it belongs to her, anyway. If Steinman and Mack put this song out it'll bowl 'em over like hay fever in August—and if I slip it to S. and M. that I intend to sing it twice an evening until it's worn out, they'll handle it, all right. And I guess you don't need to be told what's coming to the man that puts over a big song hit! You'll be able to retire to a grand-opera farm and bury yourself alive till young Gabriel toots the Big Symphony."

"It's not that," said Gladding. "The money doesn't tempt me. Or, even if it does, I wouldn't do it for the money. I never thought of people as really *needing* a song of that sort."

"They do. They and all the rest of the by, for and of the people. It's the only way you can get 'em to hang your picture over their beds alongside of Blanche Ring and John Philip Sousa. They figure that a ray of sunshine is worth a babygrandful of educational noise."

Gladding picked up the fountain-

penned lyrics and wrinkled his brows over them.

"I really believe . . . if you can get it published, under assumed names, of course, do it. And then the idea of your singing it every night." . . . He looked at her. Her eyes were sparkling. Something seemed to jump inside him. "I'll tell you what. I'll stay on a few days—I'll stay on and we'll manage it together!"

The blue eyes did more than sparkle. They snapped.

"You'll go home tomorrow—just as you intended! You'll go home to that girl in North Bend and trot her out on Main Street and hold her bundles while she picks her trousseau. As for this song, you slip me your name and address and I'll do the rest."

"But—"

"But nothing. Jake, Jake!"

One of the pseudo countrymen, at home in olive again, was passing within hail. He stopped and raised sparse, light eyebrows; then, after a slow, sidelong glance at Gladding, came over to them.

"Jake, just a question. I was wondering. How long have we been married?"

"Oh," drawled Jake, "I'm no bookkeeper—'bout eight months is close enough. Any other little thing I can do for you?"

"That's all. Thanks." Jake moved on.

"You see," she said. "Now just scribble your identity on this condescension and run along." She shoved the manuscript paper across the table. Gladding wrote on it almost in a daze, and mumbled platitudes until, smiling a "Well, it's getting late" smile, she rose, almost as though she were in her own home and about to take a caller to the door. . . . The youth in olive strolled back while she stood, alone, thoughtfully rapping her knuckles with the rolled manuscript.

"I think I could *make* you marry me for that," he said. "Say, Pearl Cassidy, what's the game?"

"Oh, no game. It's not game season—I had to let it get away. But Jake, while we're on the questions and answers—you've known me a long while; I keep losing count. Am I twenty-seven or twenty-eight?"

THE GREEK QUARTER

By John Myers O'Hara

THE cryptic letters of the golden tongue
The philhellene upon the window sees;
And hears the music of Mæonides
Above the roar by trains and traffic flung;
Heroic odes to Argive valor sung,
And strains that tell of old idyllic ease;
A solace here for servile destinies
Unknown to Hellas when the world was young.
I sip the coffee of Demetrios
And listen while my thought is far away;
The swarthy faces of the dim café
Are olive-venders on the shore of Cos;
The wall lamps flicker but I peer across
The blue Ægean sparkling in the day.

"O. HENRY'S SUCCESSOR"*

By George Frane

THIS is not to be the story of O. Henry's successor, so I have called it "O. Henry's Successor." Thus, through the style of my very first sentence you will observe that I am legitimately deserving of the mantle of O. Henry.

I have said "MY sentence" and "*I* am legitimately deserving," although I really do not mean myself. I mean the man I am writing about, T. Alberque Twiller, for this was the way he wrote —when he had been spoiled for all time as a perfectly good plumber by a magazine editor who accepted his first trial at short-story writing and printed a note under it informing the world that T. Alberque Twiller was not only a "discovery" but, more,—"the legitimate successor to the mantle!"

It's an interesting story, this story of young Twiller, but it is a difficult story to write for many reasons. You see, it has no "heart interest" and there's no good place to stick in a description of the sunset on Lake Como and its heroine has a hook nose (and neither Gibson nor Harrison Fisher go in for hook noses), so I doubt if it will ever see the light of a cheque. (Which is what makes it so difficult to write.)

It was not raining. (It's odd how the weather in this case fits into the scheme of T. Alberque Twiller and his story.) It was not raining because young Twiller was happy—or maybe the sentence ought to be written vice versa. But before we get to this point —

Young Twiller lived in Ohio, in that city which ought to be named Vespucci but which, being named in honor of the man who didn't discover America, is called Columbus. He was poor, though a plumber. One evening he happened to be sitting on the porch of his best girl's house (I wish I could say piazza or verandah, but that would spoil the atmosphere). Sue (that was her name, and isn't it funny the way real life follows the popular songs?) and he were very sad. Why are such young people sad? Because, not having much sense, they grieve because they can't get married. Alas, young Twiller had no money. Nor did Sue's old man. Twiller's gloomy elbows were on his knees, his head was cupped in his hands. Sue placed her pink Pompeian creamed (see adv. section) arm about his shoulders.

"Don't worry, dearie," said she; "things may dorsey up for us and —"

She stopped short. An inspiration had grabbed her.

Then —"I got it!" she cried. "Why don't you get busy and write a story for the magazines! Look at all the authors makin' them fortunes outa magazine stories and (very proudly) *I'll bet they ain't a bit better plumbers than you!*"

There was a dramatic pause. After the Charles Klein, Sue rattled on. "It oughta be a cinch," she observed. "And —you know it's been your ambition, Twiller, to be a swell writer like Henry O."

"Henry O?" returned young Twiller with a soupçon of poorly concealed contempt for her humbler education, "you mean O. Henry. Gee, there was one wonderful guy!"

"He's always been your hero, ain't he, Twiller?"

"Sure thing! A great guy, him! A

* With apologies to O. Henry and all his successors.

—great—guy! I've read everythin' he wrote. He was a greater guy than any writer *ever born,* believe me!"

But let us skip. A girl can do anything with a fellow who loves her. (Oh well, anyway this is a fiction story!) So what more natural under the circumstances than that Sue should persuade her Twiller to try his hand at a magazine story? Nothing. But here we must skip again—this time, backwards.

A word about Twiller. A perfectly normal, routine-lived Columbus plumber. Just that. His life in an iron-set, unchanging, undeviating, uneventful groove. As his best friend, Joe Aldrich, used to say as they sipped their Saturday night beer in the back room at Alec Dugan's: "Twill, old skeezicks, you goes along in as straight an' tiresome an' unexcitin' a line of livin' as a rhinoceros! My Gawd, why don't you do somethin' out of th' rut sometimes?"

The curtain falls for a minute at this point of our story, not to indicate a lapse of morals (as it often does in the theatre) but to indicate a lapse of time. The copy of the magazine announcing Mr. T. Alberque Twiller as O. Henry's undoubted successor was now on the stands. That Columbus circle in which O. Henry's successor (for from the moment the magazine came out everybody in Columbus began to refer to Twiller and point him out by that designation)—as I say, the circle in which Twi—I mean O. Henry's successor moved rang with praise for the great plumb—I mean magazine fiction-writing genius. Even more when the magazine published his second story and, in a second editorial note, gave added emphasis to Twiller's sound and incontestible claim to Henry's celebrated mantle. Even more when the magazine printed his third—and now printed the note in black-face type.

"Twiller, you're O. Henry's successor O. K., O. K.!"

"The mantle of O. Henry has sure descended onto your shoulders, T. Alberque, old boy!"

"You're so much like O. Henry it'd take Billy Evans to decide which was which!"

These and a thousand luscious encomiums like them were dripped day by day into young Twiller's ear by his admiring Columbus, Ohio, friends.

In a short time Twiller ceased being Twiller at all and became, at least to himself, O. Henry. Not only did he eat lots of potatoes so he'd get verisimilitudinistically fat, but his daily life began to take on divers alarming yet unmistakable, positive, O-Henry-successor symptoms. That is, so imbued was he with the idea that he was not *only* O. Henry's successor or O. Henry himself, but an O. Henry character in real life as well, that everything he did—instead of being regular and normal the way the things he used to do had been—now had the typical O. Henry "twist" at the end!

Continuing the plumbing business as a side line, he could not resist, for instance, the O. Henry last paragraph "twist" of sending in ridiculously small bills for his work. For instance, after asking Sue to marry him, he couldn't resist the last minute "twist" (with no reason whatever) of jilting her (whom he still loved) and marrying her sister Maybelle (whom he disliked intensely). And so it went. The thing became a habit. He even went so far as to give his daily life the "twist" of eating a big dinner for breakfast and coffee and rolls for dinner. He wore a dress suit in the daytime, a blue serge double-breaster at night. And thus, eventually losing his figure, his plumber's business, his life's happiness through having married Maybelle, his digestion and all respect as a moderately sane Columbus citizen—also his writing job with the magazine as O. Henry's successor, (as in November the editor discovered eight separate better O. Henry successors than he)—the Columbus, Ohio, successor to O. Henry one night securely locked the door to his room, fastened and sealed the window, pulled down the blind, turned on the gas and laid himself, fully clothed, on the bed to die.

The next morning, failing to awaken

him by rapping on the door, the landlady got her son Jake to break the door in. There was Twiller lying stark upon the counterpane!

Jake rushed over, with the proper melodramatic cry upon his lips. He shook Twiller. No movement. Again. Still the stark figure did not move. Again.

Twiller opened his eyes.*

A look of amazement smeared itself over his features.

He sniffed the air.

"What's d' matter wid yer?" asked Jake. "Why d'hell didn't you git up w'en my mudder she called you? We taught you was dead!"

"The gas," murmured Twiller as if in a puzzled dream—"the gas, the gas."

"D'gas?" ejaculated Jake blankly. "What about d'gas? It was turned off by d' bum of a gas man yistaday 'cause my mudder she couldn't get d' coin from you cheap boarders t' pay up wid!"

And so must we end our story. O. Henry's successor had "twisted" himself in the very last paragraph of his life back into the life he had "twisted" out of all chance of happy shape through the instrumentality of a "twisted" magazine editor.

This story really ought to be about one thousand words longer, as there's a lot more to tell, but O. Henry imposed this arbitrary length upon his army of "legitimate" successors.

* Get the typical O. Henry stuff?

THE AGNOSTIC

By Calvin Stoddard Crowder

I DO not know if there be God or De'il—
I do not know if death brings woe or weal—
I only know that life to me is real—
If you but smile.

I do not know if saints or sinners reign—
I do not know if life is loss or gain—
I only know that in your arms I'd fain—
Rest me a while.

ANYHOW, the hole in the doughnut is at least digestible.

PROVERBS OF BROADWAY

A ROLLING Stone gathers no Montgomery.
Where ignorance is bliss, the Follies are wise.
Make (for the) hay when the sun shines.
If at first you don't succeed, rye, rye again.
There's no fuel like an old fool.

WATER-WAGON ENCHANTMENTS

By Owen Hatteras

THE Hon. William Allen White on the charms and usufructs of prohibition in Kansas:

We have saved about $20 a head from our liquor bill to spend for things worth while.

How the money is spent:

Subscription to *The Commoner*	$1.00
Phonograph record of "Old Black Joe"	.45
Ditto of "We Shall Meet Beyond the River"	.45
2 celluloid collars at 18c	.36
1 pair of mail-order yellow shoes	2.20
1 set of the works of Bulwer-Lytton	1.75
1,000 shares of Mexican mine stock	2.25
2 cakes of scented toilet soap	.15
1 pigs-in-clover puzzle	.10
1 box of mail-order cigars	1.65
1 copy of "The Life and Times of James A. Garfield"	1.40
Chautauqua season ticket	2.00
Peruna, Swamp Root, Carter's Little Liver Pills, etc.	4.80
For the heathen in Borneo	.10
For the ditto in Formosa	.05
For the ditto in Guatemala	.05
4 bottles of cologne water	.35
Peanuts and chewing gum	6.00
1 Brazilian diamond scarf pin	.40
1 copy of "Night Life in Chicago"	.10
1 copy of "Confessions of an Actress"	.10
Postage on 62 applications for government documents	.62
Postage on 38 answers to fake advertisements	.76
1 divining rod	2.00
4 pounds of stick candy	.24
Subscription to *Ed Howe's Monthly*	.10
1 genuine Guarnerius violin (by mail)	2.10
1 madstone	.15
	$20.00

SAY what you will against civilization, it has at least got rid of whiskers, the vermiform appendix and the heart.

LIFE is a wood-shed in which every one of us gets a licking.

IT takes a man his whole life long to find out that he has been a fool his whole life long.

A ROMANCE begins with a man trying to capture a woman. It ends with a woman trying to recapture a man.

WOMEN have very simple tastes. They can get pleasure out of the conversation of children in arms and men in love.

THE NIGHT BEFORE

By Adele E. Shaw

FREDERICK DANDRIDGE entered his apartment exactly on the stroke of 2 A. M. He switched on the lights, because that was a habit, and walked over to the open fire. He threw off his fur-lined overcoat, his hat, then he went back and switched off the lights and, returning to the fire, dropped into a big, sleepy, hollow chair. He was very tired—too tired even to smoke. He had been spending his final bachelor evening with a bunch of the fellows at his club. It was an exact replica of a dozen such occasions on which he had aided in launching some other unfortunate: the same good wine and good cigars and clever stories, the same well-chosen menu. Hitherto he had felt a covert satisfaction in being host, rather than honor guest. Tonight he wasn't host; but he had been too busy during the past week putting his affairs in shape for a four weeks' absence to realize just what he was about to venture into. When he was a kid he had made a visit to the country home of some kinfolks. A memorable feature of the visit was a camp meeting where recruits were made for the church. Numerous pulpit orators swayed the young folks into making public professions of religion, as they called it. He was one of them, and the following day he had a strong revulsion of feeling, a reckless wish to run away from consequences. One preacher argued that it was only the devil tempting him. Queer how that childhood incident had once or twice lately crept in between him and his work. Queer, too, about the sinking, all-gone feeling he had about the business of making public confession of allegiance to one woman. He felt a bit uncertain about the experiment of just one woman to face across the table three times daily—just one woman with whom to go to places of amusement. He felt a streak of that childish terror of consequences. It would have been a distinct relief to blame it on the devil's workings, only he had outgrown that old superstition. Most of his friends had got cold feet at the last. Hadn't he helped them anesthetize these pre-nuptial forebodings with a final merry night? He wondered did women feel like that, and if the trousseau and the gay trappings of a smart wedding was the anesthetic they took.

It was his last night with the boys—and the wine was excellent. Also, he was very tired. A cigar? No, he wasn't equal to it, and the big, cushiony chair was soft—almost as comfy to lean against as the soft, yielding flesh of the one woman. Over there on a table her pictured face smiled back from its dull silver frame. Seemed to him, since he thought of it, that she smiled most of the time, and even when her tones were raised she spoke with a little lazy purr. He never quite liked that in other women. Also, he adored Cinderella-like feet, the kind you want to squeeze up in their silk-stockinged softness. She acknowledged to a 5-A. He used to dote on fluffy-haired débutantes, with their own complexions. Her hair wasn't at all the kind your fingers wanted to muss up, and her color never fluctuated. Yet some way she had him going—that was undeniable. There was a string on him that she had attained the highest degree of efficiency in making him dance by. His friends had probably pitied him, or worse, ridiculed him for

a fool. He had been so long immune, so chestily untrammeled, and now—

He had cut out many really worthwhile pleasures because of her. She wanted him around during all his leisure moments, you see, and he yielded weakly, rather flattered. Propinquity is a deadly thing. Throw any marriageable male and female together often enough for any considerable period, till they work up a certain degree of mutual interest, and marriage is the only cure for what follows.

Now, Elizabeth had been his friend, his intellectual comrade. They read together, saw great dramas together, discussed together sex fiction and social problems. They even talked eugenics. She had the brain of a man, but—she wasn't soft and cuddly and clingy. She was a trifle angular, and wholly independent of mere man. Also, she wore man-tailored clothes and slept in pajamas—this latter she told him. Now, he was daft about frilly females. He wanted his wife to be all woman. But Elizabeth was a good pal and he hated to lose her. When his engagement was announced she called him a fool and was tactless enough to start recounting a breezy biography of his fiancée, beginning with her pre-débutante escapades. He could hardly be expected to stand for that, so he had been forced to cut out Elizabeth.

And Evelyn, she of the clingy, swirly draperies, the violet-shaded lights and the dreamy Persian poet-lore, whose voice was like far-off music. She was svelte and shadowy. No seductive curves—just soul, thinly veiled in a body she pretended to despise. He never had a mad wish to crush her up close against him. He had kissed her, once or twice, but with no quickened heartbeat. She rested him and satisfied a minute part of him, a half-wakened soul, perhaps. But between business and the urgent claims of his fiancée, he had to scratch her off his list of diversions. He had missed her, though, especially when, worn to a frazzle, he found himself dragged along to some boresome function where he had to smirk and be agreeable, however profane he felt. Cleo had to be amused, that was all there was to it. He hoped that marriage would change things a bit and he'd have more liberty—for Dandridge was a freedom-craving animal. Also, he doted on luxurious silken things next his skin and other creature comforts.

Marriage, he had always maintained, was a successful institution solely when it was built on a base of individual and mutual freedom—words, empty words.

He was very tired. His eyelids were like lead. Oh—ho—ho—ho—o—o.

. . . . .

Were all honeymoon jaunts like this one? Caged up in stuffy sleepers and over-heated hotels, sight-seeing, sitting through dull plays—or nauseating cabaret stunts, eating late dinners, nerves on edge most of the time, a ceaseless effort to be entertaining, but ill at ease always, and bored to extinction. How he wanted his office, his desk, the satisfaction of doing things, and the goodly company of men. Romance is one thing when you can take or leave it at will, but for a steady diet, that's another thing again. One woman in a million—do you get that?—can safely pilot a restless male creature through a four weeks' honeymoon jaunt and keep the froth fizzing throughout; about that per cent knows when to efface herself. Dandridge married one of the nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand, which was unfortunate, since he happened to have a triplicate nature—but the millionth woman, with a brain that actually worked, a well-developed soul, and a body all curves and kissy places, didn't seem to come his way. Cleopatra might have kept him amused through several moons, but the woman he had taken for all the conditions the minister mentioned—well, she wasn't any reincarnation of that languorous lady, even if she did wear the front end of her name. Thus far he had only discovered three separate and distinct phases of her: a nasty temper with cry-baby accessories, an Elinor Glyn-esque way of love-making, and an insatiable demand for amuse-

ment, only her choice of amusement bored him horribly.

"Uh-huh"—he sunk lower in the soft, springy, cushiony chair. He was indeed *very* weary, and the fire purred with gentle soothing.

. . . . . .

His club was now only a thing of pleasant memory and—dues. His apartment, with its delicious sense of peace and privacy and luxurious ease, a recollection too alluring to be borne for long. The society of any other woman than his wife and her feather-brain chums and her myriad cousins — why, he wouldn't know how to listen intelligently, much less talk to one. He would hate to find himself suddenly tête-á tête with Elizabeth. Fool gossip and domestic doings, that was his regimen.

Even Evelyn's purple lamps and Persian poetry would now only wake a feeble smile; his interests were quite exhausted. His shoulders had a dejected droop and his face a chief-mourner expression when he perforce accompanied Cleo on uptown excursions—or to some show. Why the deuce did she insist on him trailing her around! When one's feminine annex demands all one's evenings, and all one's holidays, how soon one does grow sated! And when love dies inside the shell of matrimony a mackerel isn't any deader. Only an imbecile goes in for that ever-present, all-pervading stunt. The wise wife is never obtrusive. She is never all there on the surface, like an easy-to-read book. She cultivates elusiveness, if she wasn't born that way, and she encourages the creature to get out among men, to keep his wits whetted, his enthusiasm alive, in the company of interesting women. Life with just one man—one woman—is at the briefest a mighty long stretch. Why endure each other except when it is a thing to be greatly desired, when there's a keen mutual interest! But Dandridge wasn't casting about for wisdom in the woman he chose. Perhaps he thought it would germinate later.

It's rather harrowing being forced to listen to a nasty bit of gossip about one's own particular wife. That's one of the penalties of tailing a woman's kite to these infernal crushes. You find yourself suddenly jammed in back of two viper-tongued females, and you can only clench your hands and listen and swear inside and wish you were quite deaf, if the gossip chances to smear your own hearthstone. Of course it was a lie; still, it stung like a whip-lash. Now, if they'd only been men he could have said, "Pardon me, but that's my wife you are discussing. Come outside a moment, one at a time, please, where there are no feminine onlookers." But only females of the species would perpetrate a thing like, "How circumspect Cleo Dandridge has become since she married!"

"It's time. Anyway, what else would you expect? It was always she who brought about the scandals in which she figured; men never sought her until she invited it. You know she had no charm at all. I guess she's glad to rest from the chase."

And their petticoats protected them! In the nature of things they ought to have worn feathers and a beak. Wringing their necks would have afforded a fierce satisfaction. Hereafter he would accompany Cleo to fashionable crushes only by actual force. Then he'd stick close around her, to be sure of being identified as her property.

He was too darned sensitive—that was it. Why, most women who had any social experience were made targets of gossip. But that didn't salve the sting. He suddenly recalled a pertinent remark Elizabeth got in that time before he shut her off: "Yes, but why should you, of all men, deliberately choose a wife who has figured in so many sensational affairs? Don't you know a woman can't live down that sort of thing? And it's always slapping in the face the man she entraps when he least expects it. You'll be the one to pay, all right."

Elizabeth wasn't a fool. Also, she had a trick of saying things that stuck in a fellow's craw for long after.

Cleo had a peachy bunch of relations.

When they came visiting they enjoyed it so they stayed on indefinitely. And they *must* be entertained. The idea of buying cheap seats for them! One's really good cigars, too, were confiscated. Even this was not the worst. Why, he was expected to personally conduct their pleasure excursions! No use framing up something about a business appointment after business hours. He'd tried it. Nothing doing. There was no way of escaping Cleo. She was always on the job. Surely in a previous incarnation she was chief guard at some swell bughouse. What the Creator leaves unfinished the devil generally takes care of. Finding a vacuum in Cleo's top-piece, he filled it with a ferret-like shrewdness, which served her purpose. There was nothing for it but to stick around, spineless, unresisting, or else start something that called forth the combined ingenuity of a florist and a confectioner to quell, and that was expensive. And he used to swell out his chest and assert that "only a worm is dominated by a thing in petticoats." He, Dandridge, said that!

In point of abjectness he had a worm skinned several leagues.

Uh-h-h-huh! That wine was good—it was excellent! It was quite easily swallowed. Gave out such a glow, too, and he was feeling very languid. Some class to that chair as a sporific.

. . . . .

Dandridge never had taken much stock in kids. They were associated in his mind chiefly with curly-handled spoons and silver mugs—the sort of junk one's frat perpetrates in response to the beribboned announcement cards of one of its newly-wed members.

In more than one unwary moment he had been trapped into dining with some very new parent. Afterward, he had marveled at the queer, vacuous stare of his friend's once intelligent map, his asinine brand of conversation. And always mixed up in his recollection of that visit was a pungent odor of some drug and the distant sound of something between the skirl of a bagpipe and the wail of a dissolute tomcat.

It's odd how Providence generally has it in for a fellow who never greatly yearned to be a father; rather scurried away from the idea.

Four years! Ye gods! He felt like fifty. And three kids, all endowed just at first with the same cerise complexions, the same virulent type of intestinal indigestion, the same reception hours—from 8 P. M. to 5 A. M.—and the same high-powered lungs. They all had the same sinuous wriggle that defied the grip of an athlete, the same vague, fish-like stare. Gee, but they slept light! At least, when he was around. He had walked tiptoe until even the office boy indulged in unseemly mirth.

They were an acquisitive trio in the matter of infantile ills. Nothing ever got past them. He didn't recall when he had spent a quiet evening, or when the house had been free from the incense of strange herbs, the sticky trail of castor oil and—a mother-in-law. She arrived a few days before the advent of each new infant—an occasion he recalled as a nightmare—and she stayed on and held high carnival indefinitely.

Considering the size of them and the absolute uselessness of them, kids surely did come high. Doctors' bills, now; that was about the worst fly in his ointment. And bills of every conceivable sort and dimensions. He even dreamed bills. He had long since resigned from his club—too expensive. He cut out shows. It was beyond his memory when he had interviewed a tailor. Most anything would do now. Clothes cost money. Even his easy-chair had been confiscated. The grandmother of his embryo prima donnas needed it for the exclusive use of herself and the latest edition. Why hadn't he the spirit to get out somewhere evenings—to break the strain between business hours and the place where he ate hurriedly and dozed fitfully between emergency calls? Why not once in a while kick over the traces and forget about business and babies and bills? Well, just because that lady who spent his salary and had his name on her cards didn't approve of men running around nights; and, being

of the genus worm, what could he do? You see, she had developed a high-grade variety of *nerves*, which necessitated as careful handling as a package of infernal machines. Why, in the matter of nerves she could give aces and kings to a dope fiend and then rake in all the chips.

If she would only take up some occult science or new-thought theory—

He didn't remember when he had seen her wearing the dainty, frilly, faintly-scented garments with which she had inveigled him. Only drab, nondescript, sloppy things—and she was quite shapeless. She had canned the paint pot and the manicure person, and the color scheme of her kimonos and her complexion left much to be desired. Yet he was expected to stick around evenings and do the model-husband stunt.

She usually got a chance for one festive frock and one fashionable function between babies. He knew that much by the modiste's bill. But that was enough. Lord! The real cigars he could have bought with the check that paid that annual bill—and the books—even new clothes from a tailor. But he never glimpsed her in that frock. That might have compensated in a measure for losing the much wanted things that went into the price of it.

The thing that stuck in his throat and made him think gravely on cyanide was that mother-in-law; she had turned his den into a nursery and made him a wanderer on the face of things. Now, just a trunk-room would have done, if he could only have had it for his very own—if he could have turned the key and shut out the infernal racket, and smoked even the vile weeds his purse permitted, or read, undisturbed, a book from the public library. When had he indulged in the luxury of clear, connected thought! Why, even his office was no longer immune from the intrusion of furtive-eyed collectors. And all this that he might maintain a home (?) and have conferred on him annually the privilege of fatherhood.

What was that pithy remark a notorious General once made about war? Surely he wasn't a married man!

. . . . . .

Something fell together and started a shower of noisy explosions. Charred coals and sparks. Dandridge sat up, but his senses were still drugged with sleep—his eyelids weighed as with a veil of cobwebs. His hands and arms were leaden, refusing to answer his will. A great weight oppressed his chest. His spine was as an empty hose-pipe and he breathed with a great effort. At last he stood upright and stretched his six feet of whipcord muscles. His glance encountered familiar objects in a familiar room. Still dazed, he faced his reflection in a long mirror opposite. Why, that was himself—Dandridge—all right—his own room, too. What was all this! He seemed to have fallen asleep before that drowsy fire—and—and—

A tremendous relief pervaded him like a draught of rare old wine.

"Ugh!" he breathed. "That was one hell of a dream!"

SIMILIA similibus curantur. The one sure cure for love is falling in love with another girl.

THE INNUMERABLE CARAVAN

By Owen Hatteras

WHERE are all the old-timers, the darlings of the yellowed front pages, the headline heroes and heroines of yesteryear? What has become of Lord Dunraven? Amos Rusie? Affinity Earle? Edouard de Rezske? The Cherry Sisters? Karl Decker? Evangelina Cisneros? Tod Sloane? Dr. Lorentz? Danny Maher? Kellar the magician? Sandow? Sheriff Bob Chandler? Mormon Roberts? Gen. Carl Browne? Dr. Mary Walker? Peter Jackson? Mary Ellen Lease? Cassie Chadwick? Harry Lehr? Mayor Schmitz? Lawyer Delmas? Senator Aldrich? Gen. Uribe-Uribe? Castro? The Mad Mullah? Mrs. Elinor Glyn? Ballinger? Henry George, Jr.? Gen. Warren Keifer? Santos-Dumont? Gen. Kuropatkin? Dr. Cook? Jack Rose? Lotta? Jake Kilrain? Hinky-Dink? Link Steffens? Gen. Zelaya? Butcher Weyler? Joe Leiter? Tom Lawson? Gas Addicks? Abdul Hamid? Tama Jim Wilson? Dr. Friedmann? The Rev. Billy Sunday? John Lawrence Sullivan? Debs? Maud S.? The McNamara Brothers? Paderewski? J. Adam Bede? The Earl of Yarmouth? Boni de Castellane? Berry Wall? The Duke of the Abruzzi? King Manuel? Oscar Hammerstein? Eleanora Duse? The Rev. Charles H. Sheldon? Hall Caine? Rodin? Abe Reuf? La Follette? Charles W. Fairbanks? Chauncey M. Depew? Simeon Ford? Lottie Collins? Gen. Coxey?



WHEN good New Yorkers die they go to Hell. Anything to avoid Dr. Parkhurst!

AT the bottom of every scandal there is always enough truth to justify half a dozen.

IT is a sin to believe evil of others, but it is seldom a mistake.

A BAD man is the sort who sheds a tear every time he speaks of a good woman.

MEN have a much better time of it than women. For one thing, they marry later. For another thing, they die earlier.

THE SHOULDERS OF ATLAS

By Peter F. O'Shea

DOMINIC KULESKI rose from his seat at the head of the table. Even sitting, one would know that he was a bigger man than any of the fourteen other men who were his boarders; and when he stood, he looked what he was—a giant, lean, hard as wood, and strong, not with the partial strength which is so often found, but with strength in every part of him—in hands, shoulders, neck, back and legs. His face, brown-mustached and a little pock-marked, if it could have been seen above an ancient seagoer's costume, might have been the face of a Viking; above his blue shirt and overalls, it was simply the face of a workingman.

His twelve-year-old daughter waited on the table as usual—that is, she put triplicate dishes of food near each end and at the middle of the long, bare wooden table. Dominic's wife was not doing the cooking this morning, but was sitting on his left, while her sister, having temporarily abandoned her own house to its own devices, had come over to substitute for her at the stove. When the wife had crowded a chair diagonally at the corner of the table, pushing the dishes back until enough of the point of the wood protruded to support her plate, the boarders had looked at one another significantly; one of the young men had smiled, and another looked awed and afraid.

Dominic leaned over and kissed his wife, and pressed her hands. He was not usually a demonstrative man, but his wife was going to be sick today. He reached his hat and coat from the first nail of the row, took his dinner box from the girl, and almost stepped on a child as he turned. It was his youngest. He stooped, put down the dinner box, scooped up the baby in his two big hands, and kissed it a sort of whimsical good-bye, for when he should return at the end of the day's work it would probably no longer be his youngest. There were more children than usual around today, as his sister-in-law had brought over some of hers to be under her eye; later she would bring them away with her, and all Dominic's own brood, too, except the big girl, so that the place might be quiet. He stepped among them as he went out, unobstructed by those who saw him; but one noisily energetic nephew stumbled backward into him. When the little fellow felt a big hand enfolding his shoulder, the laughter stopped on his face as he looked up. Dominic smiled at his causeless fear and put him gently aside. He was glad that all these were not his, welcoming them the more for it; and glad that each of those other little faces that he knew so well did belong permanently to him. He grunted a command to them that they had better come outdoors from under the feet of the men; and as they followed him out they might have been a school, except that some of them were too young and most of their faces too dirty. Behind them came the boarders. Each of them, as he left the table-room, stopped in the door to say—this was an unusual morning—"Gen dobri" to Dominic's wife, some of them with a smile of good cheer, some with a clumsy nod, the frightened young man still in awe of her, the light-minded one now rather apologetic.

Dominic strode ahead of the other men, paying no attention to them. This was partly from habit, because it is

better that the head of a boarding-house, like a schoolmaster, should not be too familiar; and partly because he was musing into the future. He wondered what difference another baby would make in his expenses—whether, in fact, the expenses, and therefore the receipts, would have to be expanded to stretch around the increase in numbers, or whether the extra baby would have to be fitted into present expenses. He did not see how either thing could be done. It would seem that if there had been any means either of increasing his earnings or of decreasing his spendings he would have found them out before now. It was true that he had already found so many. Each time that the word necessity took on a new and sterner meaning he had been able, probably with the help of God, to stretch his and his wife's working capacity. This continual process kept him always stretched and always attentive to God. But there must be a breaking point somewhere.

He passed his onion bed, where to his practiced eye the two rows in the middle which he had weeded that morning stood out lonesomely fresh-earthed, accusing him of the field-like growth to their right and calling his attention to the ever-increasing spreading of green in the rows to their left. It reminded him of an electric sign on Main Street, where a red snake chased its tail around a board just big enough so that the tail was never quite caught; only, here the snake was a green band as broad as the length of his rows, and when he had pursued it for many weary days to the edge of the field it reappeared again at the other side, as though it had dived over there underground. He had planted the largest amount of land that he thought he could keep cared for; and with him the words largest, and work, and hope were real superlatives.

It was a mile and a half of trolley-tracked road from where they lived to the mill. Nobody walked it but the Polanders, first because this distance across the meadow road looked much greater than if it had lain through streets, and second because most of the others lived in tenement or residence districts farther uptown. The Poles themselves would have lived nearer the mill but that the meadow land was too valuable to be turned from farming to such low rents. Their location at the edge of the city was generally flooded in the springtime, but they were hardy people, and the river water did good to their small gardens and acre or two-acre fields. Dominic had worked already this morning, as he did every morning, from four o'clock until breakfast; but the knees of his overalls, though they sagged out in bunches which never came from standing by his machine, were not dirty, nor even wet, for he had protected them with folded pieces of potato bag tied around each thigh. The bags were now hanging on a nail against the back wall to dry in readiness for the evening session.

Far to the left the river was broad enough so that he could see a section of it beyond the rise of the nearer bank, and he knew where it ran between the two low ranges of mountain by the dip of the blue sky into the cleft of the green. The sun was just above the shoulder of the nearer mountain; a beam of it glanced blindingly from the lagoon into his eyes as he turned off the road into the yard of the mill, with its smell of sulphur gas. As he went on the gas grew stronger and stronger until he reached the woodroom, when the smell was no longer there, for the wind from the lagoon kept it away. There were some men already arrived; a few of them were always there ten minutes early; others habitually came running in breathless at the last moment; some were variable, early one morning and late the next. It was said, with enough possibility of truth to give spice to the jest, that, having no clocks, they kept time by the shadow of the window jamb. But Dominic always arrived at two minutes of seven—a reasonable margin of safety, which did not waste time properly belonging to the onions. When Dominic entered, the regular early birds said "Hello" or

"Gen dobri," looking at the clock as they said it, and got down off the piles of wood, finishing up the stray ends of their conversation as they sidled over to their places. Dominic's fourteen boarders were not far behind him. The foreman had a secret gratitude to him for his bell-wethering them in to work, and it is possible that Dominic, in ignorance of this feeling, was passing over a source of ten or fifteen cents a day raise. It was of just this ten or fifteen cents that Dominic was thinking as he absentmindedly tore a splinter from a log and with a movement of his big fingers swept off the bright steel table polished by the soft bark of numberless successive logs—not raise in his pay, for he did not hope for that even enough to think of it, but of some indefinite, miraculous increment of the world's legacy to him. A tiny baby did not cost much, but in time a nondescript, naked babe would become a child to be clothed and shoed respectably.

A miniature lightning-flash spitting of spark from the end of the room started the whir of a motor which was immediately overtaken by the roar of belts and pulleys, so that when the steam whistle on the roof blew it sounded small and far away for an instant, and then was drowned away into infinity by the sudden screech of many knot-pullers as they bit into the shiny white logs and the hungry bass hum of the circle of knives on Dominic's machine and others like it as they cut air for a moment of gathering speed before the brown-barked logs were pushed against them. Dominic held the log with both hands against the knives and turned it so that every part of the bark was chewed away and the stick bared into a clean-picked four-foot length of straight white bone. His left hand pulled the stick toward him until the end stuck over the edge of the table, and with a downward push flipped it dexterously onto the truck car standing on the track behind him, while his right hand, reaching across the table to the supply truck, had secured a second brown log and pushed it against the knives almost before the inertia of their hum had diminished. Both big hands, as before, worked the log back and forth into whiteness, and separated, the left to flop the clean log, the right to reach for a new victim upon which they came together again as before; and repeat, not once, or ten times, but four times a minute for ten hours. The hum of the knives was high and hollow for instants, as they found only air to cut; full and solid and greedily satisfied as they bit into the bark; triumphantly swift as dots as they snapped off the beginnings of a twig; raging and earsplitting as they came upon a knot. Sometimes a log was too big, he judged, to go into the mouths of the chippers which were to cut it into chips as small and not much thicker than one's finger nail; so before loading it upon the car he stood it up momentarily beneath the drop wedge of the splitting machine, which flicked it into two down the middle and again into fourths as he turned it part way around in the instant between the downward jabs of the short vertical arm—savage, invisibly swift little jabs, scarce penetrating the end of the wood, which changed a round log into two half logs as if at the tap of a twentieth century wand. Then he gripped the four quarters together at the end with his big fingers, swung the stick upon the truck and turned back to his work even before the pieces had rolled apart. Sometimes he was relieved when a big log thus necessitated the breaking of the monotony; sometimes annoyed that it interrupted the even continuation of his work. In either case, he scarcely ever paused to look down the row of machines where sixty other men were doing the same thing as himself, though not doing it so easily or so productively. At any rate, there was no danger of his losing his job—thank God for that!

The old gray horse, with the reins coiled around the hames of his collar and the chain-traces thrown across his broad back, walked in ahead of big Mike, the driver, and turned about unbidden in front of Dominic's car, step-

ping in between the narrow little tracks; waited while Mike lifted the traces and cross-bar from his yellowed flanks and attached the chain to the coupling pin; then leaned back, still unbidden, until his bulk touched the load of wood and forced the car along the track to be coupled to its neighbor. When six little cars had thus been assembled into a train—Dominic meanwhile loading onto a reserve truck on the second track—the driver shouted unheard a useless "Gap!" and threw a spruce knot at the yellow flank. The dirty gray horse slowly heaved forward and with lowered head and unseeing eyes, fitting his paces to the short distance between ties, lazily drew the clean wood away, with a little rumbling of the ground and two or three bumps audible above the room noise as the loads passed over an especially uneven joint of the rails.

This morning Dominic kept looking across the table of his machine and across the supply track beyond it from which he took the raw logs, at the windows, watching everyone who went by outside in the yard. When the old gray horse bumped a new car, piled high with brown logs, into the place of the empty one, it completely shut off his view of the window, and he worked feverishly until the pine was low enough for him to see over it again. Toward nine o'clock he saw the bookkeeper go by on his way to the office. He left his machine and sought the foreman, down at the end of the room. "Mister Bill," he said, making his sentence half a statement and half a question, "I go to office to get doctor."

"All right," said the foreman. "What's the matter?"

"My wife," said Dominic. The foreman nodded. He had a standing pronouncement that Polish women were never sick except for one cause, and some of them not for that. If he had any curiosity to verify his guess in this case, he would patronize one of Dominic's fourteen with a loud-voiced, verbless question or two.

Dominic passed back along the other side of the room, where the men at the row of knot-pullers searched for brown circles on the white surfaces of the stripped logs, held them beneath the half-round chisel at rest in its vertical spindle and pressed the foot-lever which drove the chisel, already beginning to whirl, into the knot, so that it either twisted the knot out whole or cut it into powder, leaving a cylindrical polished hole in place of the brown fibre which would have discolored the pulp. Some of his fourteen were in the row, but he paid no attention to them, and they gave him only a glance as he passed silently.

As he pulled aside the tin-covered door and let it slide shut behind him, the outside silence was at first like a greater noise and then made him hurry, as though the air were lighter by its lack of sound. In the engine-room he passed the hum of a motor and the smooth, speedy, endless wind of big belts, and came into the clamor of the mill, passing down an alley between the two pulp machines, which filled the air with a great thumping roar and thrashed the shadows so that he felt like a silent ghost in an unnatural shifting twilight compounded of sunshine and black. Across the railroad track, the repair shop was silent and cool and restful, and he thought it unoccupied until he heard a hearty oath of "Damn this sweat," and glancing into the shadow beneath the window at the other end of the room, he saw two husky steamfitters tugging at a die-stock centered on a pipe in the bench vise.

The bookkeeper's legs were twisted around the legs of his high stool, and he was adding up columns of figures in a big flat book. When Dominic stepped on the sill he grunted, but did not lift his eyes until he had written two more figures in his total. Then he looked around.

"Mister," said Dominic, "will you telephone Doctor Healy come my house this morning forenoon? You know what house I live in?" The bookkeeper nodded; he had the addresses of all the workmen. "Kids sick?" he asked. "No; nobody. My wife. She—" "Oh, I see. Not sick now, but going to be

—is that it?" calculated the bookkeeper, piecing out the logic of Dominic's contradictory words from his knowledge of probabilities. "All right; I'll find out whether he can come." If that was meant for a dismissal, Dominic did not take it as such, but held his place until the bookkeeper swung the desk 'phone around, spoke into it something about obstetrics at 50 Mill St., and nodded to Dominic as he hung up. "Doctor'll be there," he said. Dominic said "Thank you, Mister," and turned back into the shop.

The master mechanic, Jack O'Donnell, called to him as he went by. "Hullo, Dominic!" he said, stopping momentarily with a chisel and hammer in his hands, his overalls a greasy black and his limp-peaked black cap pushed to the back of his head, while his gray eyes twinkled as he interrupted his thinking-whistle. "What's the trouble?"

"Hullo, Mr. Jack," Dominic answered smiling, the "Mister"—since the master mechanic had no supervision over him—being purely a title of respect. "I telephone for doctor. My wife's going to have a baby."

"Another?" said the mechanic. "Where are you going to put them all?"

"I do' know. I do' know at all," said Dominic, making a little spreading gesture with his hands. At first he included the mechanic's helper in his glance, but he did not like the latter's expression and turned back to O'Donnell, rather glad of a sympathetic listener. "I work in the morning. I work days. I work after work, when it not rain. I work more, but clock go round and the world go round and it get dark, and I have to sleep." There was no complaint in his voice; indeed, there was in his face something of the partly awed, partly humorous recognition of the impossibility of things with which a returned explorer might report "No passage" out of a gorge over a mountain. "I pull the weeds; they grow again. Sometimes I like to kill those weeds. I pull all I can; I can't pull any more. Maybe I could do more logs—I dunno; but I get no more pay, so I just keep my job. Work not hard for me; I am one strong man. But—no time! And babies come, and get big, and more babies come, boys and girls, and bimeby get big and cost. They like log-splitter in woodroom"—he held his thumb and finger close together and then drew them slantingly apart to outline a wedge—"first little, then wide very quick, and bigger all the time. And now today another baby."

"Then why the hell—" commenced the mechanic's helper.

"Shut up!" said O'Donnell sharply. "Cost you twenty-five for the doctor, eh?"

"Yes," said Dominic. "I got it."

"And the christening?"

"Yes, that cost, too. You come? Please!"

O'Donnell shook his head. "No," he declined. "Thanks. But you'll need money. Want to come to work for me tomorrow? I've got a job on where I'll need lumpers, two men, to carry things and pull and lift."

"Tomorrow Sunday," said Dominic, shaking his head. "Priest say we no work Sunday."

"Good thing for you, too," said the other, "or you'd be dead long ago. But the priest will let you work on this job. My priest lets me. It's work that's got to be done. You go to early mass, same as I do, eight o'clock. You get here at nine, like the bookkeeper on week-days. We'll work till we get through—maybe four o'clock in the afternoon; maybe, if anything goes wrong, four o'clock next morning. This isn't for every Sunday—just tomorrow. Nine o'clock."

"Mister Jack, thanks," said Dominic. "I'll come." And he walked off with a suspicion of buoyancy in his step.

"The pay is two dollars for an eight-hour day," O'Donnell flung after him.

Dominic was very glad that he had talked to the master mechanic. That two dollars was so unexpected that it seemed like a gift. It was a very good omen, and as he retraced his course through the various noises and nodal

rooms of silence the bustle and the quiet had lost their threat and bade him only labor and be easy. He even stopped for a moment beside the two chipping machines inside the door of the woodroom, which made chips the size of his thumb nail out of all the logs which he and so many others like him spent all their time cleaning, and watched the two men working easily, standing before the vertical circular casings of the machines. They would up-end a white log into the funnel-like mouth, with its short throat tangent to the side of the casing, and hold it there until the wheel of chisels inside took hold of the wood and drew it down in, eating away its lower end so that the log dropped steadily, as if it were being swallowed whole, until it disappeared entirely and another log was sent in after it. He heard the chips rattling against the sides of the big tin delivery pipe as they were being blown up to the bin in the fourth story, thought again of their size, and laughed aloud in sheer joy at seeing something done at the proper speed. Then he returned to his machine and worked very fast in an unconscious endeavor to reach a less insignificant ratio to the two little chippers.

This particular day seemed very long, and late in the afternoon he began, unprecedentedly, to get tired. A half hour before quitting time he turned to find the foreman standing at his side. "You'll lose your fingers watching the clock," the foreman said, talking in a voice calculated to barely reach him, and without any unnecessary effort or motions, as men become used to talking who are constantly in noisy places. "You've done enough work anyway today; better go home." He blew between his fingers the unmusical note of the quitting whistle, beckoned toward the door and smiled. Dominic finished his log while he was recovering from his surprise, then picked up his coat and dinner-box from under his machine and hurried out. These Americans were not such bad fellows after all.

The sun shone into his face as he turned into the road, so that he could see only a golden blue haze until he pulled the brim of his slouch hat down over his eyes. The road was a white glare, and on the right the telephone poles' long black shadows slanted curvedly up the grassy and cindery sides of the railroad bank to end somewhere beyond it. On the left, the shadow of a single tree away in the meadow seemed a pool of coolness, and the sun sifted the grass of the fields with a luminous yellow green, turning an occasional acre of ripening oats into a waved lake of cream.

When Dominic reached the rise where the road climbs over the meadow dike, his children, playing at his sister-in-law's house, saw him and shouted, and two of them came running to meet him and carry his dinner-box. He put the smaller one on his shoulder and let the other trot beside him, talking in her schoolchild's English while he interrupted his Polish thoughts to nod or grunt at her. These older children, with their American chatter, seemed of a strange nationality; the little ones without speech, or with only the words learned from their mother in the kitchen, were much nearer to him. "You will have to go around by the back door," the child said. "The front door's locked." He repeated "Locked?" after her in surprise, for he could not recall having seen the key since a few weeks after they had first rented the house, and he had forgotten that there was a key; but it seemed that his wife had not—that was the housewife of it. The child, thinking he had not understood, started to translate into Polish. He stopped her gruffly, put the little one down, and sent them back.

As he passed around the side of the house everything was quiet, until all of a sudden from somewhere behind the closed blinds came a tiny wail. He hastened forward and almost stepped on the upturned blade of a hoe left there by that careless boy Stan. He picked it up and, as he went up the steps, set it against the stoop, where the handle would beckon to him after supper. Before he could touch the door there were

hurried light steps inside and it opened before him, revealing the frowning face of a white-aproned nurse ready to drive him away until she divined that he was the father of the family, when the frown went away, she put her finger to her lips, gave him a swift and respectful glance from head to foot, and nodded reassurance to his unspoken question. Smiling, she held up two fingers. "Two!" she said. He looked uncomprehendingly from her hand to her face. She shook the two fingers at him and laughed a little maliciously. "Two!" she repeated. In the silence he could hear across four backyards his boy Joe's shrill voice suddenly raised in play. Then from inside his own door came again one tiny cry, and then another.

The nurse, frightened of him, slammed the door in his face. He sat down upon the stoop, and the tears began to come into his eyes. He bowed his head on his arms and sobbed very bitterly for a long time.

When at last he could look up, his throat was hard and the bones of his fingers were sore from interlocking with each other. His eyes felt dry and big. He sat very quiet for a while; then he reached for his hat, put it on, and stood up. The sky in the west was red, the fields looked ready for the dew; the mountains were watching the west, listening to the meadows, feeling the blue sky on their haunches.

He took off his hat before the glory of God in the world, and went in to greet the two tiny strangers and his wife.

BETTER UNSAID

By Harris Moore Shannon

HOW many things are spoken that were better left unsaid,
Even though they're uttered in an unaffected way,
Which reminds me of a funny little incident
That happened down the street the other day.
It was at a very fashionable gathering
That a lady dropped her garter on the floor,
And it lay there quite unclaimed, for the lady was ashamed
To acknowledge that it was the one she wore.
And when the hostess, laughing, held the garter up to view,
And gaily asked its owners to declare it,
A fellow rose and said (while a lady's cheeks turned red),
"Why, I know it; it belongs to Lady Garrett."
Now wasn't that a foolish thing to say,
And wasn't it a silly thing to do?
It came as quite a starter when he recognized the garter,
Because everybody wondered how he knew.

THE law is to justice as a wart is to Ossa.

THE ROBE OF MAKE-BELIEVE

By Emma Clement

SHE had not meant that a single person should know. She was not even very sure of it herself, so it would have been quite impossible to have explained it very lucidly to anyone else, even had she wanted to. Yet she found to her dismay that those secrets which are the most precious are usually the hardest to keep. Plenty of times she might be left alone for whole weary, homesick evenings, but not tonight, when most she wanted to be. The others kept coming in, bursting through the door in tempestuous haste, to borrow her blue necklace, or to have their gowns fastened, or to see if she would pin on their flowers, or observe their hair, or arrange their bows. And each and every one, after one swift glance at her, stood transfixed in the doorway and cried out in tones of unaffected amazement, "My dear, are you going anywhere?"

And to each and everyone she had laughed the same insidious, teasing laugh and replied, "Who knows? Stranger things have happened!"

Yet all the time she knew she was but evading the question because she could not give a direct answer. She was not even sure that she could give an answer at all; the idea was still so dim and unformed in her mind, an idea which was most of all a desire for something different, a hope of driving away the loneliness by the only means in her power.

So she turned a resolutely deaf ear to all the curious questionings and went on piling her heavy hair in its softest, fluffiest, most becoming fashion just as if on the exact position of each separate lock there rested a tremendous destiny. Then at last, with a little wondering sigh, she slipped into a gown that fell about her in soft, gleaming folds, a gown that was neither one color nor another, but many blended tints of light and shadow, which brought out the shining waves of her hair, and the deep glow in her dream-clouded eyes.

Doors opened and shut all along the corridor as she came to her own and peered furtively out. The others were just descending the stairs, arms intertwined, borne along, as it seemed, by light laughter and snatches of song. She waited only until they had disappeared around the first curve, then stole softly to the head of the balustrade and crouched down close to the rails where she could see the staircase and the hall underneath. There, at the foot of the stairs, stood the group of escorts smiling up into the faces of the girls, who smiled back as they gaily went to meet them. At the bottom greetings were exchanged, and then they were swept outdoors on a last breeze of floating laughter.

She waited a minute after the door was slammed in order to be very sure, then rose, went back a few steps to destroy the ignominy of her former position, and also descended the stairs. What had been unconscious grace to the others was by her studied and polished to the point of perfection, a grace gained not from practise but from careful observation. The touch of hauteur in the poise of her head was truly patrician, and there was the faintest suggestion of jasmine blossoms and wide oaken staircases in the slim hand that rested ever so lightly on the railing, just as a Southern belle might have done in the sunny times before the war. With an eye to the effectiveness

of all, she had placed her caller, not at the foot of the stairs where she would have to maintain a fixed, unbending smile all the way down, but a little to one side where she could flash upon him one of all suffusing radiance just as she turned the last curve and held out her hand in impulsive greeting. Everything developed flawlessly; not an awkward phrase nor misplaced smile, as they exchanged the first few words and turned together towards the library.

There the scene was set for their coming (she had seen to that before). Only the side lights burned, bathing the room in mellow glow, and drawn up before the open fire, the great davenport stretched forth its arms in hospitable welcome. She sank into it blissfully, piled up the pillows, and smiled at him to show that he might sit beside her if he wished. The fire-light playing warmly upon her face and hair dispelled embarrassment and instilled the deep peace of content. Wondrously at ease, she felt as if she did not need to talk unless she wished, not at all to satisfy that hideous monster which usually hung over her, demanding instant conversation regardless of desire or ability. So she sat for a few minutes, silent, until quite naturally they began to talk of the things they really cared about, not just the obvious incidents of the day, but closer matters which, for the thoughtful, enrich and deepen life. And the wonder of having someone who understood and cared; the miracle of finding a deep delight in conversation instead of a maddening necessity. Content lay close about her like a robe, soft and warm, through whose enveloping folds no chill could creep in.

Yet happy as she was, there rested in the very back of her mind a vague, half-formed fear that at any time someone might come and find her there, an uncomfortable alertness lest at any moment she might be caught and with no explanation to offer. The outer door was ajar, and through it a girl's voice, clear and insistent, floated in from the frosty air, "I have had the most splendid time—oh, surely I hope so. Good night."

The words cut sharply across her own thoughts, and left her dazed and silent. The robe of make-believe slipped from her shoulders and, before she could catch it, fell to the ground. Robbed of its protecting warmth she shivered and grew cold. Dully she turned to look beside her on the sofa, and instead of the man, saw the firelight playing on a heap of tumbled pillows. The mockery of it rose and struck her as it might have an outsider who had happened in and found her with all the illusion gone. An old rhyme with its taunting refrain rang in her ears,

" Molly, Molly Make-a-Beau,
Make him of fire or make him of snow,
Long as your dream holds fine and fair,
Molly, Molly what do you care!"

So long, only so long. Why had she not realized that the meaning of it was all on that one word? Yet still the taunting, suggestive rhyme beat against her brain, and she could not help but hear.

" Molly, Molly make a beau,
Make him of fire or make him of snow."

She had made snow men in her youth and they had melted at the first warm touch. Would a fire man last any better?

Deep into the glowing heart of the fire she gazed, and remained motionless, held by some magic power. It was her shrine of dreams; dreams that had been dreamed and forgotten, dreams that were still to be, dreams of sorrow and of gladness; dreams which would be fulfilled, and those whose only mission was to bring peace into yearning hearts for a very little while. Many of her own burned there, the dreams of success, the dreams of service, the dreams of love. And tonight, because she was very lonely, it was for the love dream that she searched.

Steadily she gazed at the leaping flames until piece by piece she found

it and wove it into form. The man of fire, which she searched for, must be made of many parts. Manliness, she found, and strength, in the darting scarlet points, courage invincible, chivalry and honor, without stain. Slowly, from all the parts, the man evolved and took shape. In the violet lights which shot now and then through the red she found the things of the spirit; purity and faith, an ardent quest for the true in life, a soul not scornful of the commonplace, but able to soar far above it at will. He was splendid now in the full strength of body and mind, yet something, the vital something which meant perfection, was still lacking.

Then, still gazing before her, she found it, hidden away within the fire's glowing heart. It was the man's love which leaped out in all its power: love all-pervading and absolute, love that had tenderness and strength, love which asked and gave, which protected and adored.

The rhyme rang again in her ears; this time with a new promise. It seemed as if it must last: it held so fine and fair. Its presence was near and real. The joy of it swept through her; the warmth of it held her close like a fleecy robe in a cold room. The fire man was made.

There was a stampede on the front porch, loud voices and shrill laughter broke the spell. The robe fell again from her shoulders and this time she did not try to catch it. Shivering with sudden cold, she darted around the davenport and up the strairs just as the crowd was swept in on a final gust of light-hearted laughter.

LITTLE FLAKES OF SUNSET

By Grace Hazard Conkling

LITTLE flakes of sunset
Blown about the sky,
Burn like trellised roses,
Blooming heaven-high.
You should have one for your hair,
And a star to pin it there,
If the wind were I!

Perilous your rose-face!
How shall I beware?
No gold so forbidden
As your shining hair!
Rose of Sunset, Golden Rose,
If you knew what my heart knows,
Would it make you care?

WHEN a man is hard-up his thanks are even less sought than his cheques.

CYNICISM is the art of appraising things at their wholesale prices.

APROPOS of nothing, why doesn't some Christian Science healer try his magic as a Christian Science embalmer?

IN HELL WITH THE DRAMATISTS

By Randolph Bartlett

SCENE: *Outside a theatre, beyond the River Styx.*

TIME: *When all the present-day dramatists are physically dead. (Not to be confused with the time when they are morally dead.)*

SATAN

(*Enters, followed by man in overalls, grumbling and lugging a bucket of paste, roll of paper, and billposter's brush.*)

Stir yourself. Get up that three-sheet and let's be off before the dramatists arrive.

BILLPOSTER

Say, boss, don't I ever get a vacation? When you sent me back to earth to work as advance agent for a musical comedy, it was about the limit in dirty jobs, and you've got to hand it to me for putting over some hot stuff for you. But I just get back and you send me out sticking bills. I don't want any more of these responsible jobs. Let me be just an imp for a change.

SATAN

I'll think it over when I get time; but finish up this job first. I've got a stunt on for tonight that will do you good. This is to be Dramatists' Initiation.

BILLPOSTER

Say—what's the matter with all them guys? They think they're in heaven.

SATAN

That's just their conceit. I've been letting them go on thinking so until I got a good collection of them, and now I'm going to put them all through the first degree in a body.

BILLPOSTER

Great stuff! (*Starts posting three-sheet.*)

SATAN

Hurry up! And if anyone comes, don't answer any questions. (*Exit.*)

MAURICE MAETERLINCK

(*Enters slowly and moodily, and stares at Billposter. Muses.*) Man in overalls—symbol of toil. Brush, similar to broom—symbol of domestic slavery. Paste—symbol of affinities. Three-sheet—symbol of mendacity. Ha! A whole drama unfolds itself. (*He passes heavily across stage and exits.*)

BILLPOSTER

(*As he finishes the work, turns and looks at Maeterlinck.*)

Nut!

(*Takes up implements and exits. The billboard reads: "Tonight—A Play by the Greatest Living Dramatist."*)

Enter George Bernard Shaw and Eugene Brieux, arm in arm.

BRIEUX

My dear Shaw, it is so charming to meet you here. Heaven would not be heaven without the man who declared me the greatest dramatist west of Russia. But there is one thing I have always wanted to ask you—why did you say "west of Russia," for we both know those Russians cannot hold a candle to either of us?

SHAW

I had to place you definitely somewhere, in order to make an exception of myself.

BRIEUX

But England is west of Russia.

SHAW

England—yes. But England does not contain me. I permeate the universe. I am English, Chinese, Persian, American, cosmic. Anything west of Russia is west of me, for I am more Russian than Gorky, just as I am more French than you yourself, my dear Brieux.

BRIEUX

I begin not to think so much of heaven after all. (*Unlinks his arm from that of his prefaceur.*)

SHAW

That's your provincialism. The fact of the matter is that, without my personal recommendation, it is doubtful if you, Ibsen, or any other dramatist would be allowed here at all.

BRIEUX

(*Sarcastically.*) If you have such a low opinion of us, why did you exert this influence in our behalf?

SHAW

What would heaven be for me, without the means of permanently displaying my admitted superiority?

BRIEUX

(*Turning away.*) Insufferable! (*Sees the three-sheet.*) But what is this? "The Greatest of Living Dramatists!" (*He and Shaw turn to the theater.*)

AUGUST STRINDBERG

(*Rushes in, waves his arms frantically, rolls his eyes and tears his towsled hair. Howls.*)

I hate everybody.

(*Strindberg rushes away and dramtists pour upon the stage from every direction.*)

SIR JAMES BARRIE

What was that fearful racket?

SHAW

Just Strindberg indulging himself in his substitute for the ice-cream soda of the matinee girl.

BARRIE

I shall certainly lodge a protest against him. I might say that the management of this institution leaves much to be desired. I might say that I should like to see St. Peter panned, but I refrain. However, heaven should be free from all manifestations of the physical and violent.

IBSEN

Oh, you Englishmen, with your rules of order and conventional desire to make everyone act as you wish to act yourselves! Don't you realize that heaven *is* heaven, only because it frees the individual from all responsibility to the mob?

BARRIE

But you Swedes are too noisy.

IBSEN

Ignoramus! I am a Norwegian—an entirely different nationality.

BARRIE

Then, if I am to have perfect freedom of action I shall continue to call you a Swede.

GORKY

Freedom! That's the thing. Now I am able to write my great anarchistic drama at last. No more theoretical sociology. I shall kill the czarovitch and one grand duke in the first act, the czarina and two grand dukes in the second act, the czar and three grand dukes in the third act—but where—oh where, am I to find a climax for my fourth act?

MAETERLINCK

(*Passing across the front of the group and addressing space.*) Pellucid! Crystalline! At last I nearly understand me.

BRIEUX

(*Calling to the assemblage.*) See—gentlemen; we are going to learn tonight what our successors are doing with the wisdom we imparted.

SHAW

I shan't go. I never attend performances of my own plays, as no actors are capable of doing them justice.

PINERO

It says "living dramatist," Shaw.

SHAW

Certainly, the greatest living dramatist, of course, is the one who is most successful in writing my plays without leaving out any of the important parts.

PINERO

(*Mockingly.*) Haw, haw, haw! Why you were not even a success when you were alive. Everybody knows I set the fashion that made you possible, but even then you had to print your plays —you couldn't get them produced.

SHAW

That's what proves my superiority. Anybody can write plays that are so stupid the public will like them. I educated the people so that they can now appreciate my imitators.

GEORGE M. COHAN

(*To Clyde Fitch.*) Say, Clyde, doesn't it hand you an awful scream the way these boys hate themselves? I suppose you, or Gus Thomas, or Dave Belasco, or even poor old Theo. Kremer, made more on any one play net than was taken in, gross, on all the high-brow stuff this whole regiment wrote.

IBSEN

(*Sternly.*) Oswald Alving, go!!

COHAN

(*To Ibsen.*) My boy, wake up and get wise to me. I'm the fellow that put New York on the map. I'll take you up to Forty-second Street and let you fire a cannon down Broadway, and I'll pay a million dollars for every guy you hit that knows whether you wrote plays or ran a barber shop. Am I right, 'Gene?

EUGENE WALTER

Dead right, George.

IBSEN

This is indeed some strange, new symbolic language. The world progresses swiftly, and the younger generation is knocking at the door.

CHARLES RANN KENNEDY

Knocking at the door is all right, Henry, if it were confined to that, but the trouble is that this particular younger generation does not limit its knocking to any particular locality. As an apostle of brotherly love I should wish that this greatest living dramatist could be a composite of all of us, but that is impossible, and it is the logical sequence of evolution that by now the Great American Drama must have been written (possibly by a naturalized citizen) and its author will be the one whose play we shall witness tonight.

STRINDBERG

(*Hurtles himself to the center of the stage, towsles himself and does a dervish act. Howls.*) I hate everybody! (*Rushes off.*)

MARTIN BECK

(*Rushing on breathlessly.*) Say, where did he go? I want to book him on the Orpheum circuit. (*He is hustled off the stage.*)

BARRIE

I certainly shall lodge a complaint with the authorities against that man. There's such a thing as too much freedom.

HERMANN SUDERMANN

(*Gathering a little crowd of Germans about him, including Hauptmann, Wedekind and Goethe.*)

This is all very amusing to us, who know that nothing can endure without the deep sincerity of the German philosophic—

(*He is interrupted by the sound of a*

small bell, off stage, and as it tinkles a voice calls out, authoritatively: "Don't move—hold it—clear space down stage, center. That's it. Now." The bell tinkles again and David Belasco strides in and takes the calcium.)

BELASCO

Effective entrance, don't you think?

KREMER

Nice work, Dave, nice work. Let's see—you got that from my "Demons of the Dungeons," didn't you?

BELASCO

(*Bitterly.*) Always the accusation of plagiarism! And this is heaven!

EUGENE WALTER

Now look here, Dave, you must admit—

BELASCO

Admit nothing! You scribblers turn out a lot of rot and then get somebody with brains to make a play out of it. Then you want all the credit and part of the royalties. I tell you this greatest dramatist is a man who knows how to handle the saw and hammer and run the switchboard. But what's the use trying to tell you fellows anything? You only *write!* (*He retires to a corner by himself.*)

MAETERLINCK

I have just thought a purple thought! How inscrutably comprehensible I am to me!

SHAW

This is all growing extremely tiresome. I have not spoken nor been spoken to, or of, in several minutes.

PINERO

If it's like that here, where you are, how much more so must it be back there, where you are not!

SHAW

Bosh! I left a censor working for me. So long as he keeps telling the people I am unfit for production, my place is assured.

(*Further recriminations are prevented by the return of the Billposter, now disguised as a theatrical manager, with a heavy encrustation of diamonds. He goes into the lobby, enters box-office, and raises window. The American dramatists unanimously take cards from their pockets and form a line at the window.*)

COHAN

Give me the left lower stage box.

MANAGER

Nuthin' doin'.

EUGENE WALTER

Take 'em off, Abe—we know you.

COHAN

(*Regaining his breath.*) You mean to say you don't recognize the profession?

MANAGER

You got me, first time.

COHAN

(*Disgustedly.*) And they call this heaven!

MANAGER

You'll have to see the boss about that.

COHAN

You'd better bet I'll see the boss, and what's more, I'll *get you* if I have to spend one week's royalties of "Seven Keys to Baldpate," and buy the theater.

CHARLES KLEIN

Well, what's the name of this greatest living dramatist? Maybe we don't want to see the show after all. There's only thirty-six possible dramatic situations, and I used all of them—at least all anybody else ever had used—so I don't see much use going to a show. Come on—what's his name?

MANAGER

William Shakespeare.

SHAW

(*Startled.*) What's that?

MANAGER

You heard me, Mr. Shaw.

SHAW

But he's been dead longer than any of us.

MANAGER

You'll have to see the boss about that too. I don't book the shows—I just take the money.

SHAW

Well, where is "the boss?"

MANAGER

I can't just say, but it's about half-past seven, and from the rising temperature I guess he's not far off.

(*Satan suddenly appears in the midst of them, in conventional Satanic garb, red tights, horns, and tail.*)

COHAN

Gee, fellows, look. Here's Louis Morrison. Say, I shouldn't think they'd let you wear that make-up here.

SATAN

We'll cut out the joking from now on. You've all been laboring under the delusion that this is heaven. It isn't. It's hell, and I'm the Devil.

SHAW

Well, I'm damned!

SATAN

Precisely so.

GOETHE

Why, how do you do, Mephisto. Don't you remember me? I gave you a lot of free advertising, you know. In fact, I might be regarded as your greatest press agent.

SATAN

Exactly—and you came about as near the truth as the rest of the press agents. You advertised me too strongly, and ever since, I've had to go around in this uncomfortable costume, or my own imps don't know me. You might at least have selected a cooler color than red. You've a lot to answer for.

GOETHE

I don't see how you can blame me for the way the actors dressed the part.

SATAN

It all goes back to you. If you hadn't written the play there wouldn't have been the opportunity.

GOETHE

There's gratitude for you! I wrote the original problem play, and the Devil doesn't even thank me for it!

SHAW

Serves you right! And besides, you have no business here anyhow. The rest of us are all moderns.

GOETHE

Moderns! Why I was modern before the rest of you were born.

(*He retires sulkily to the rear.*)

COHAN

(*Goes up to Satan and taps him on the shoulder.*) Say, do you think you can get away with this stuff about Shakespeare being the greatest living dramatist?

SATAN

That's the way we bill him. Seems to be the general opinion that he's a pretty live one yet.

EUGENE WALTER

Huh! Just a scheme to get out of paying royalties. But I'll tip you off to one thing—you won't get much of a house from this crowd. We had to forget all Shakespeare knew before we could land K. & E. time.

SATAN

Oh, I'm not worrying about the business. The fact is, you haven't entire say in the matter. One of your duties

as subjects of my dominion is to attend a Shakespearean play every evening.

(*A long pause.*)

SHAW

(*Sepuchrally.*) This *is* hell!

SATAN

Then, when you have learned the first principles of the drama, you will be required to witness your own plays in rotation.

IBSEN

(*Plaintively.*) Excuse me, but am I to understand that I will have to sit through performances of American plays?

SATAN

(*Inexorably and with a cruel grin.*) You will, but just imagine the revenge you will have when the rest have to sit through "John Gabriel Borkman."

(*The dramatists gather in little groups and murmurs of rebellion are heard.*) Come, come, gentlemen. There is no use holding back. The sooner you go in the sooner the show will start, and the sooner it will be over for the night. Remember, I'm all-powerful here. This is hell, you know.

ALL THE DRAMATISTS

(*The same thought occurring to each at the same time.*) But if this is hell, where are the women?

SATAN

You gave them enough hell on earth.

(*The dramatists thoughtfully file into the theatre. Strindberg rushes around, gnashing his teeth rapturously.*) Hold on there—who let you in here? Any fool ought to know that it is heaven for you to see people in hell, and the only way to give you hell is to send you to heaven. (*Sternly.*) Back to your punishment.

STRINDBERG

(*Hysterically.*) Don't, brother—how can you be so cruel to your blood relative?

SATAN

(*Prods him with a trident and chases him out.*) Away! Out of my sight! I couldn't stand hell myself with you around.

(*Strindberg's howls die away in the distance. Groans of agony are heard coming from the theater.*)

SATAN (*after a pause*)

It does seem too bad, for they were all good friends of mine.

IF I had a face like that I'd wear a veil whenever I read a love-story.

WHEN a girl lies to you always pretend you believe her. It won't be hard work because you will, anyway.

MOST banqueters are not so much interested in "We have with us tonight" as they are in "We have *within* us tonight."

AN ODE TO MUNICH

By Pierre D'Aubigny

I

FRÄULEIN, nochmal eins!
Ein mass Hofbräu! Ein mass Kochelbräu!
O Sophie, du Engel! O Frida! O Elsbeth!
O Kunigunda! O Paula! O Lottchen! O Brünnhilde!
O sautierte Kartoffeln! O bohnen Salat!
O Kükenbrüstchen in Aspik!
O Augustinerbräuhauptausschank!
O Maibowle!

II

Mach geschwindt, Fräulein! Die Speisekarte, bitte!
Schweinschulter mit Reinetten!
Linsen Suppe bürgerlich!
Oesterreichische Rostbrat'l Nudeln mit Schinken!
Junge Tauben mit Kresse!
Kalbsfilet mit grünen Erbsen!
Wienerwürstl mit Meerrettig!
Gekochter gesalzener Kabeljau mit Sauce Crème!
Apfelkuchen mit Schlagsahne!
Löwenbräu!

III

Spatenbräu!
Hackerbräu!
Metzgerbräu!
Matthäserbräu!

IV

Maifischrogen mit brauner Butter!
Bratwürstl mit Senf! Pschorrbräu!
Fasan Pastete mit Pumpernickel! Gebackene Eierpflanzer!
Grillierte Lachsschnitte! Wachtein mit Weinkraut!
Rostbif! Bifstek!
Filet von Zander in Weisswein!

Schweinskotelette in Weinsulz! Ochsenmaul Salat!
Pommersche Gänsebrust! Wildhuhn in Portweingelée!
Hummer majonnaise! Hering Salat!
Paprikaschnitzel! Ungarischer Rostbraten! Lachsschinken!
Salzburgernockerl! Pfannenkuchen! Salzgurken!
Aprikozen Kompotte! Wollwurst! Nudelsuppe!
Hofbräu!

V

Schweitzer, Camembert, Edam, Mainzer, Liptauer, Emmenthaler, Kühlbracher und Gervaiser Käse!
Schokolade! Jägerschnitzel! Markknochen auf Schwarzbrot!
Tauben orientalisch! Marinierte Topfsülze!
Pfälzer Bratwürst mit Kraut!
Kalbsmidder! Ochsenschwanz! Lammkeule! Apfelkuchen!
Gedünstete Pflaumen!
Paulanerbräu! Burgerbräu! Eberlbräu!
Kindlbräu! Hackerbräu!
Hofbräu!

VI

Sterneckerbräu! Spatenbräu! Matthäserbräu! Bürgerbräu! Paulanerbräu! Augustinerbräu! Unionbräu! Franziskanerbräu! Hackerbräu! Kochelbräu! Kindlbräu! Metzgerbräu! Eberlbräu! Thomasbräu! Löwenbräu! Pschorrbräu! Hofbräu!

CHILDREN are always proud of their parents, but they outgrow it before it does them much harm.

MARRIAGE is sentimental bankruptcy and the appointment of a receiver.

THE hardest thing to resist is the temptation to resist temptation.

AMUSING diversion for a December afternoon: Approach one of the damsels who collect Christmas funds for the Salvation Army and offer her a dollar a day to work in your kitchen.

MR. JOHN SMITH

By Irving S. Watson

A CERTAIN fine flavor of agnosticism is in him: he holds ecclesiastics and all their works in undisguised suspicion. What, after all, do the black-robed brethren do for a living? Preach a mushy sermon or two of a Sunday; exude an oily nothing or two at an occasional funeral; pick up a five-dollar bill now and then at a wedding; for the rest, simper and purr among the women, talking silly woman talk, swilling tea and lemonade, listening to bogus tales of woe, stirring up trouble. What else? Precious little! How, indeed, do they put in their time? How do they spend their long, long days, their unjocund nights? There is a problem!

This friend of ours has no truck with such gentlemen of God, though he knows one or two who are less odious than the rest and will even take a glass of beer. But he doesn't believe much in their Heaven, and he believes even less in their Hell. That Hell talk is all moonshine, a bugaboo to scare the ignorant. We get all of the Hell that we need or deserve right here on earth. Rewards and punishments are meted out to us while we live. He knows it because he has had personal proofs of it. There was the time, for instance, when he drank all that Bock beer with that fat brewery collector—and then swore at that Salvation Army girl who badgered him for ten cents for the poor hoboes. Well, the very next day he cut himself badly while shaving, and that night two of the children came down with chicken-pox and the doctor's bill was $18.50.

Again, there was the time when he walloped these same young ones for chasing the cat through the house while he was doubled up with toothache—and two or three days later it was so bad that he had to have three teeth pulled out, and the dentist (a lodge brother, think of it!) soaked him for $6. And then there was that blushful robbery of his wife's tin bank—that foul, sneaking burglary in his own house, stocking-footed, loathsome, nocturnal—that crime which brought its swift retribution in the shape of a pinochle game that set him back $12, and led to his great quarrel with his brother's wife's brother, and came mighty near converting two respectable families into twin camorras of Kentucky feudists. Hell? Pish! There is Hell enough here! Beyond the grave there is nothing but nothing—a sort of soft, boozy somnolence and forgetfulness, like sleeping Sunday morning. When we are dead we are dead.

Nevertheless, he has naught to say against True Religion. Far from it! True Religion is a sweet and venerable thing, the glory of those with a natural talent for virtue, a fit recreation for the Good Woman. A man who professes piety is one to be watched with a narrow eye, but not so with a woman. If his own wife ever ventured to express sentiments of downright disbelief it would give him a severe shock—almost as severe a one, indeed, as if she ventured to defend or apologize for a Bad Woman. He expects her to assent without question when he lays down the doctrine that Hell is nothing but bunk, but he doesn't want her, nor will be allow her, to set up a theology of her own. As well smoke cigarettes! Or begin knocking

around with those hussies of suffragettes!

However, piety is one thing, and chasing after slick young (or, worse still, old) preachers is quite another thing. A Good Woman's first duty is to her husband and children, and that duty takes precedence of any desire she may have to pay her devotions to her God. That is to say, it is much more important that she should serve a decent dinner on Sunday than that she should be dressing up in her newest clothes and rushing off to hear some jackass in a white choker preaching upon the rum question—and maybe filling her up with a lot of nonsense about beer causing diabetes and drink costing the nation $5,000,000,000 a year and drinkers' children dying of blood-poisoning and fits.

Aside from this, there is no sound reason why she shouldn't practice any form of Christianity or pseudo-Christianity that happens to please her—always setting aside Christian Science, and those fantastic heresies which involve open-air baptism, gospel-wagoning, home prayers and such like abominations. As for the children, the Sunday school is the right place for them on Sundays—from the age of three years. What they learn, of course, is chiefly nonsense, but happily they quickly forget it, and so it does them no harm. Their absence makes the house very quiet and comfortable on Sunday afternoons. While they are away, our friend, their father, stretches out upon the sofa in the sitting room and reads the magazine section of the Sunday paper. Sometimes those comic pictures are really awfully funny. Presently he falls asleep.

As I have said, long and profound reflection has convinced him that when a man dies he is dead all over. But nevertheless, he is always much impressed by spectacular funerals, with long ceremonies by brethren in white sheepskin aprons, and he likes to muse upon the fact that when he dies himself, his lodge will give him a noble send-off, with a heap of floral set pieces piled around his coffin and ten or twelve hacks in the procession. He wishes it were possible to hide behind the door, and so hear what the preacher has to say about him. He can see his lodge brothers solemnly shaking hands over his mortal remains, and commenting professionally upon his extraordinarily natural appearance, and pronouncing upon him the verdict that he hadn't a single enemy in the world save himself. He knows the whole ritual and is genuinely affected by it. He also knows that road-house where pallbearers stop for refreshment on their way home from the cemetery. He can see the boys piling in from the hacks, and lining up at the bar, and blowing off the foam, and saying, "Well, here's *to* him!"

Question him and he will deny stoutly that he has any belief in spirits, and even grow belligerent about it, but if you pin him down he will admit finally that "there must be something in it." In proof whereof he will tell you about a visit that his wife's aunt made to a certain Mme. Le Grande after her husband was killed on the railroad. The moment the old lady entered the seance chamber the madam sang out, "You seek word from one who is happy in the spirit world!" Was the old lady in deep mourning? Yes, of course, she was. But how are you going to account for the fact that the madam told her things that no one save her dead husband knew—for example, that the insurance policy was in the bureau drawer, along with the marriage certificate and the bank book? How could she know that old Uncle Jamison suffered from corns? Or that the house dog missed him? Or that he was an Odd Fellow? Or that he and Aunt Mollie used to have an occasional falling out?

Such things are mysterious. They are not easily explained. It is all well enough to scoff and sneer, but facts are still facts. As for ghosts, he doesn't believe in them at all. If he met a ghost at night, he would heave a shoe at it, tackle it, grab it by the throat, and yell for the police. Or, failing that, he would turn his back upon it, walk

briskly away, and think no more about it. And yet he remembers queer experiences and queerer tales. When he was a boy, for example, he used to know a house in which strange lights appeared at night and from which strange noises issued. Some said that a crazy man had killed himself there; others that a skeleton had been discovered in the cellar 8 years before. Let those who can explain it, do so—or forever hold their peace! Also, there is the matter of presentments. What made him so sure that little Johnnie would be a boy? Again, there is the fact that Friday is undoubtedly the unluckiest day of the week, and the thirteenth the unluckiest of the month. Laugh if you will—but would any sane couple be married on Friday the thirteenth?

This man of ours, as I have said, is a skeptic. It is hard to fool him. Try as you will, you can never make him believe that doctors know much. They class with the preachers as frauds, and are ten times as expensive. They come in, look wise, write a prescription that costs 80 cents at the drug-store, and then forget you. Maybe you get well and maybe you don't. If you do, they claim all the credit—and send in a bill for at least $6. And if you don't, they want you to go to a hospital and be butchered by one of their friends. The friend charges $100, and then the two thieves divide the swag. And after the operation you get something else—and the same old grafters advocate *another* operation.

Fortunately enough, there is no need for a sharp man to submit himself to that sort of slaughter. There is a certain old family remedy that you can buy at the drug-store for 50 cents a bottle—a sort of sarsaparilla, or something of the sort, purely vegetable—which will cure nine-tenths of all diseases in one day. You take a big dose before going to bed, wrap yourself in a thick blanket—and wake up well. It is the best thing in the world for cramps, and is also good for headaches, sour stomach, indigestion and spring fever. If it doesn't work the first time, try it again the next night, and add a couple of good, strong pills. This remedy has been used in our friend's family for 30 years. His mother brought five children through croup, measles and whooping cough with it. His wife always keeps a bottle of it in the bath-room cupboard, along with the arnica, the magnesia-powder, the rock-and-rye for colds, and the sweet spirits of nitre. One bottle of it is worth all the doctors unhung—and particularly all the *young* doctors, with their silky whiskers, their ramming of thermometers down babies' throats, and their delusion that they know everything.

Next to doctors, our friend is most suspicious of newspapers. He takes no stock, as he says, in newspaper talk. You can never believe what you read. If the papers say that a pitcher has got a glass arm and won't be worth anything for six months, the chances are that he will go into the box next day and shut out the White Sox without half trying. And if the papers roast a politician, it is pretty good proof that he is an all-right fellow. Nevertheless, all politicians are crooks, especially the reformers. In the whole United States there is not a single honest job-holder, and not one who could earn more than $12 a week if he had to work in the rolling mills. Such grafters are always being showed up in the papers, but as soon as the people rise up and knock one bunch out, another and worse bunch comes in.

Very few men in public life are clever enough to deceive this unquenchable skeptic, this penetrator of frauds. For example, he has got Woodrow sized up: Woodrow is one of those college professors who think they know it all. As for Roosevelt, he is a secret agent of the trusts, and was in the pay of Harriman. Taft was even worse: he was too fat to do anything but play golf. Bryan is nothing but a money-maker, a dollar-chaser. Champ Clark is owned by the brewers. In New York, Sulzer is probably the best of them, no matter

what the bought newspapers say. The Senate is full of millionaires who borrow money from John D. Rockefeller. The reformers are all crazy. The police are nothing but crooks. The trusts have got the country by the neck. All the food we eat comes out of cold storage. Congress is—

But who is this doubting friend of ours? Who is this master agnostic? Go upon the public street, O brother, and heave a brick. It will hit him!



THE PURLING OF THE PLATITUDINARIANS

A NATION cannot properly be served by any man who for a moment measures his interest against her advantage.—*Woodrow Wilson.*

THE love we give away is the only love we keep.—*Elbert Hubbard.*

MARRIAGE steadies a man.—*Ed. Howe.*

BAD teeth are apt to ache in the midst of important deals.—*Herbert Kaufman.*

LABOR unions have been one of the greatest factors in improving the material and moral conditions of the wage-earners.—*Theodore Roosevelt.*

HE is a cheap, shallow man who doesn't recognize a Supreme Being.
—*The Rev. Charles Stelzle.*

THE national trade of a nation is a vital asset.—*Hudson Maxim.*

WE must stop this exploiting of the many for the benefit of the few.
—*Prof. Scott Nearing.*

LIFE is smooth under that roof where every dweller is considerate of every other.
—*Ada Patterson.*

YOU can no more set the working people apart from the rest of our nation than you can isolate gravity from the mass of matter that constitutes the earth.—*Samuel Gompers.*

THERE is yet hope.—*Dr. Munyon.*

GOD knows.—*William H. Taft.*



IT used to be thought in America that a woman ceased to be a lady the moment her name appeared in a newspaper. It is no longer thought so, but it is still true.

WOMEN have a good deal more sense than men. But men would have just as much if there were no women.

LEAD the simple life—and become a simpleton!

HILARY DUANE'S WIDOW

By Ruth Kimball Gardiner

MRS. DUANE heard her visitor's name with a flash of helpless rage at the bandaged eyes which condemned her to temporary blindness. Till now, the accident, the few weeks of darkness, had not seriously distressed her, but that Kitty Mills should come and go in that darkness was intolerable. Sometime, somewhere, she had hoped they two would meet, rehearsing in her fancy many scenes in which the center of the stage was wholly hers. The other women who had played parts in Hilary Duane's life, known or conjectured by his widow, had moved on another plane. Kitty Mills alone had always been "possible." Mrs. Duane had never dignified the transient others by jealousy, but Kitty had roused in Hilary something deeper than the rest. Kitty was what no other woman had ever been, a rival. There had been a day when Mrs. Duane, accustomed to twitch Hilary back to allegiance whenever she felt her real supremacy endangered, had realized, with angry amazement, that she dared not put strain on the cord. She had never forgiven Kitty the humiliation of that day. Kitty alone had threatened to usurp her place, to come first with Hilary.

In the last month of Hilary's life there had been another grievance against Kitty. The fear that she might come first offended merely a wife's pride of possession; that Kitty had slighted him stung a maternal sense. More than once he had asked whether Kitty had sent to inquire, and his wife, moved by the appeal of the eternal boy in him, had brought flowers, naming Kitty as sender. She understood finally a trait of Hilary then, for he gave the flowers scarcely a glance, content with the tribute to his power, turning from them to the exaggerated recognition of the happiness his wife's presence gave him, which was always his expression of remorse and his self-betrayal.

The three years since his death had not softened Mrs. Duane toward Kitty. She was not actively vindictive, but her account with life could not be balanced without payment from Kitty. Somehow, sometime, she must let Kitty know that she had been aware all along and yet had not cared to interfere, secure in her position, ranking Kitty finally in Kitty's own eyes with those other women who after her first years with Hilary had not mattered to his wife. That Kitty must fancy her stupidly unseeing, continued to sting her pride.

Now, when the meeting so long fancied but never really expected was to become reality, Kitty was to see her in the disadvantage of blindness. For a moment her hands played with the bandage. Surely no other moment could be worth so much, no other face be so satisfying to see. Her hands dropped with appreciation of her folly. To make her temporary blindness permanent—Kitty was not worth it. She stood awaiting her coming, balancing the blindness against its disadvantage to Kitty. If there could be no glimpse of a face to betray the purpose of Kitty's call, at least the entrance must be made on a dark stage. Kitty would miss her effect.

"Mrs. Duane!" Kitty said uncertainly.

"Mrs. Milton, is it not?"

She spoke the name without hint of

recognizing it, smilingly vaguely, feeling through the darkness the pause her apparent unfamiliarity with it gave the visitor.

"Mrs. George Milton," Kitty explained. "I married two years ago and left the stage. When I met you last I was Kitty Mills. I hope you haven't forgotten me."

She spoke with unlooked-for earnestness. Mrs. Duane, wondering at the tone, discarded her earlier impression that since chance had brought Kitty to this remote Western town, she was merely doing the obvious thing. Mrs. Duane's presence and her accident would be heard of by any comer. Not to call on Hilary Duane's widow would leave Kitty with something to excuse to Hilton, and Mrs. Duane felt that she was not a woman to risk the self-accusation of excuses. Something more than this, she felt now, must lie behind the call.

"Miss Mills? But of course. So good of you to come to see me. I remember the name perfectly. You played *Helen* in my husband's last play. Fancy you being out here! Quite the end of the world, isn't it?"

"My husband has business interests here," Kitty explained. "The new oil fields, you know. Perhaps you've heard of him."

Mrs. Duane disclaimed knowledge. In the fortnight since her arrival and her accident she had not been in the way of hearing things. Was Mrs. Hilton staying long? Was the finding Santa Rosa interesting? Empty yet, Mrs. Duane fancied, but later in the season—

"Inconveniently empty for me," Kitty said. "There isn't a soul in the town who ever saw or heard of me before—nobody who knows me. I really didn't know what to do until I heard you were in the hotel. So fortunate! I simply had to find somebody who can say I really am Kitty Mills. Saturday night luck, isn't it?"

The old phrase of Hilary's rang in Mrs. Duane's ears and chilled her.

"And even with me, blindfolded as I am, you had to tell me who you are before I knew you."

She spoke without definite intent, but in the anxious tone of Kitty's response she recognized that somehow she had struck a blow.

"I hadn't realized that you couldn't see me. It must make a difference," she said, "but after all, the voice is always characteristic. You do recognize my voice, don't you."

Mrs. Duane listened critically.

"It's—really, if you hadn't told me your name I'm not at all sure—I never heard you speak off the stage more than once or twice, did I? On the stage, of course, so many voices are alike. Is it important that I should be sure of you?"

"Oh, important! Why, it's awfully important! It's like this. You've heard, of course, about the tremendous boom in oil lands they're expecting out here. The big men have grabbed almost everything, but George—Mr. Milton—managed to get an option on a tract of good land. Well, of course, the big men are simply moving heaven and earth to do him out of it. They've—oh, it's all mixed up, but the option expires to-day. He's got to put up ten thousand dollars or lose out. It's the biggest deal he ever tried to swing and if he loses he'll be down and out. He thought he had everything fixed, but there's been crooked work all along the line and the money he counted on isn't here. Of course, I've got money and anywhere else on earth there wouldn't be a bit of trouble, but out here—well, if I can't find somebody to identify me I can't get a draft cashed and George loses."

Mrs. Duane heard the rustle of silk as Kitty rose to her feet and caught a breath of heavy, familiar perfume.

"It's not very clear to me," she said, "but don't they arrange matters like that by telegraph?"

"They say the wires are down between this and 'Frisco. Oh, it's all part of their game to squeeze George out! They've blocked everything, and there's no time left. That's why I came to you. It's just a formality. All you've

got to do is to say I am known to you —I'm Kitty Mills—and it will be all right. As Hilary used to say, 'It won't cost you a burnt match.'"

Mrs. Duane's hands tightened on the arms of her chair.

"I don't recall hearing my husband use that expression. I can't—the longer I listen to your voice—I'm sorry—but I really can't be sure of your identity from the voice alone."

She heard a murmur of dismay from Kitty.

"I have a very bad memory for voices—even for voices I know well; and yours—it's precisely as if you were some stranger telephoning to me."

"And if I were telephoning—oh, there must be some way of identifying myself to you! I'd have to tell you something that you and I alone knew, wouldn't I? I'd—I've got it. Don't you remember being at rehearsal one day when Hilary roasted me so for the way I read that third-act speech? 'We played—oh, we were only playing that afternoon, but at least then, then, if only for an afternoon, I came first with you.' Don't you recall how many times he made me—why, don't you remember he said, 'If you ever had believed you really were the most important thing in the world to any man you wouldn't say it like that'?"

Mrs. Duane listened with bent head. Kitty repeated the speech.

"It's a difficult speech," Mrs. Duane said. "I remember he found fault with the reading of it when the second company was rehearsing. He found the same fault with Miss Perkins and with Miss Lorraine afterward. They—"

"But Perkins didn't do this. I heard her in Minneapolis. 'It doesn't matter about afterward. I know I came first that day.'"

She read the speech tremblingly and broke off into a laugh which ended in a sob. The return to her natural voice was startling.

"Don't you recognize my voice now? Perkins couldn't get that laugh, so Hilary cut the line out. I was the only one who used that bit of business. Don't you remember how Hilary liked it?"

Mrs. Duane felt her anger throb in red flame behind her bandage.

"I paid so little attention at the time. Really, I can't—"

"Oh Mrs. Duane!" Kitty pleaded, "I don't believe you understand how little a thing it is for you and how much it means to me. It's going to break George's heart if this thing falls through. Except for me it's—it's the most important thing on earth to him, his success is. That is the first time I've had a chance to help him at all, to be worth while, and I can't bear to fall down. There isn't—oh, there isn't anything in the world I wouldn't do to help him win! You'll only have to say you know me. Surely I'm proving to you who I am. I knew Mr. Duane so well—so much better than anybody else who played *Helen*. I could tell you things about him, what he liked and all that, that Perkins and Lorraine never knew. They weren't—they weren't the same kind. I—"

"If I could see you, I—"

"Of course, I know. You'd say you know me if you could only be sure. I knew you'd help. I'm not good at thinking of things. Can't you think of some test? You can, can't you? I don't care what it is. Hilary said you always could be depended on when everything else failed. You meant so much to him. I'm trying to mean just as much to George. He doesn't care for anything but this deal—and me. I can't let him fail. Oh, do—I beg you to help. Think of some—"

Mrs. Duane got to her feet abruptly.

"There is a test,' she said. "Wait."

She groped her way to the writing-desk and bent above her writing pad, guiding her right hand with her left as she wrote slowly.

"Is it something in writing?" Kitty asked. "Can't I do it?"

Mrs. Duane put out a hand to wave her away.

"No. Sit down over there."

She felt the stiffness of her lips, the dryness of her mouth as she traced the

unforgotten words of the letter Hilary had carelessly dropped so long before. She could see the backward slant of Kitty's handwriting, the unmistakable claiming of Hilary. Her hand trembled as she wrote. The center of the stage was hers. She ended the copy and rose.

"Your quoting that speech about coming first suggested the test," she said, smiling. "I suppose a woman always likes to think she is the most important thing in the world to a man, doesn't she? I wonder, though, whether she ever really is—whether in her heart of heart she doesn't always know she isn't. Take this, please."

She held out what she had written.

"Can you read it?"

"'The subconscious feeling is a dread of your going away.'" Kitty read aloud. "'You are so dear, so dear to me tonight that I can not bear to let you go. Every'—Oh!—"

"Can't you make it out? Isn't it an exact copy?"

"I don't understand—I can't—"

"If you will write at the bottom of the page the name of the person who wrote that letter and the name of the person to whom it was written I shall know that you are Kitty Mills."

She heard the letter crush in Kitty's hand.

"What are you going to do with this?" Kitty asked, catching her breath.

Mrs. Duane smiled.

"You knew me all along! You've trapped me! You're going to give it to George. He'll know—oh, you can't do that! Why, you can't."

"You refuse the test?"

"Oh, you can't really mean this! It isn't fair. You can't be as cruel as that. It's ruin to me. I won't do it! It couldn't do you any good. Hilary's dead now. He never really cared for me—never for anybody but you. I was—oh, you don't know what he was like when he wanted a thing! It wasn't all my—I never hurt you. There was always somebody with him. No, no! Don't ask me to ruin myself with George. He cares a lot for me. He'd never forgive me. It would be the end of everything. I can't! I don't deserve this! You won't—"

She caught Mrs. Duane's hand.

"Oh, please! Oh, for God's sake don't make me do it! I never did anything to you. What good could it do you? You don't know George. He'd never get over it. He'd leave me. I told you he doesn't care for anything but just this deal and me. He—"

"Which does he care for most? You know him. Choose for him."

For an instant Mrs. Duane thought Kitty meant to strike her. Her lips drew into a sneer.

"I won't do it!" Kitty screamed. "You hate me because you think I tried to get Hilary away from you! I never did! I swear I never did. It was all his fault. I never cared for him!"

Mrs. Duane leaned forward, quivering with fury, and struck Kitty's hands.

"You — you — cheap — thing!" she said between her clenched teeth.

Kitty flung herself at her feet in sobbing appeal. The touch of theatricalism stirred in Mrs. Duane nothing but disgust. Her fingers closed on the letter Kitty pressed against her. Kitty caught it from her again and came to her feet with the snarl of a beaten animal.

"I'll sign it," she said thickly. "You can give it to George. Give it to him, you devil!"

Mrs. Duane heard her move to the table. The pen scratched as she wrote. In silence she put the letter into Mrs. Duane's hand.

"George is waiting down stairs," she said. "You can tell the man with him you know I'm Kitty Mills."

"Ring the bell."

There was a brief silence. Mrs. Duane broke it suddenly.

"You made the choice for Milton. You know him. You know—" the words came out in a rush of exultation—"you know you don't come first with him—either!"

She tore the letter across and flung it from her.

"Tell them to come up," she said, triumphant. "I know you—oh, I know you perfectly!"

ON THE FEAST OF THE SEVEN SORROWS

By M. A. Davis

ONLY a few flickering shafts of light pierced the darkness of the storm clouds, which were slowly, stealthily creeping up the valley to enshroud the convent of Our Lady on the hill. The tall tapers on the high altar trembled in the gusts of wind that came in through the chapel windows, to where knelt the nuns in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at the close of the *tantum ergo* of the Benediction on the feast of Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows.

The heads of even the littlest pupils were bowed in the awe they felt rather than understood.

In a tiny room on the topmost floor, illuminated only by fitful flashes of lightning, knelt a woman with red hair, before a cheap crucifix. Between the sobs that shook her frame she murmured, "Sacred Heart, hear me. Our Lady of the Seven Dolors, save me—save me!"

Twice she rose and made the sign of the cross with the holy water from the china font that was suspended by a lavender ribbon from a tack, whose garish brass head seemed incongruous with its sombre surroundings, like the peroxide head of some harlot among virgins.

Beneath a cheaply mounted photograph of Bouguereau's "Mother of Sorrows" stood a table strewn with books and papers. Across an open volume of Father Faber's "At the Foot of the Cross" lay a letter. "Come to me," it read. "Three long, dreary years have I waited to say this. The courts have at last pronounced the decree of divorce, and I am free to speak the words that have so long palpitated in my heart. Do not, little one, let your religious convictions concerning divorce stand between us now. I know you are against a marriage not blessed by one of your priests, but what do priests——?"

A bit of tear-stained note paper hid the rest. On it was written, in a shaking feminine hand: "I have struggled, God and the saints know, to be resigned to the life of one of this sisterhood, but the love in my heart has conquered. I will not offend our holy mother, the Church, by the hypocrisy of a marriage not sanctioned. I will come to you, but not as your wife——"

As the last notes of the hymn, "O Sacrament, We Thee Adore," echoed and reëchoed along the empty corridors, the storm, as if held in check by the devotions of the faithful, broke in all its fury over the convent. The wind shook the casements and alternately roared and moaned for entrance. Then the lightning, like a band of furious fiends, danced from the cross-crowned spire of the convent to the ground, seeming to stop but once—at the window of the red-haired woman.

The door opened to admit a pious nun in the habit of the order. Blessing herself with water from the font that hung by the worldly looking tack, she said, softly, addressing herself to the kneeling figure of the woman: "The Reverend Mother of Novices is ready to receive you in the Novitiate parlor, if, dear child, you are convinced that

our good Lord has found you worthy to entrust you with the gift of a vocation for our holy order."

The red-haired woman made no reply. Sister Mary Dyonisius shook her gently by the shoulder, but the Sacred Heart and Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows had heard and answered her prayer. And pressed to the wounds of the suffering Christ on the crucifix were the dead lips of the kneeling red-haired woman.



IN A CAFE

By Carlton C. Fowler

FROM the small hat a feathery plume like snow
Hides half the blushing roses of her face;
But from the other side one still may trace
The sharp, clear profile and one eye aglow,
The little pointed chin and neck's soft flow.
She watches how the amber bubbles rise,
Their sparkling light reflected in her eyes,
Filled with a vision of the long ago.

Eyes where the subtle snares the Borgias used
In shadowy horrors of the midnight dance,
With Machiavellian humor are infused,
And worldly lore that reads men at a glance.
Wise with a woman's wisdom—yet how fair—
A child with innocent eyes and golden hair!



THERE is one peculiarity about telling the truth: it is always more or less disagreeable.

VICE is a form of generosity. No man without vices is ever generous.

WHEN two women are sincere and genuine friends, it is a sign that they have no man friend in common.

A BACHELOR'S virtue depends upon his alertness. A married man's depends upon his wife's.

A MAN spends half his life pursuing women and the other half trying to get away from them.

DEATH: A DISCUSSION

By Robert W. Woodruff

THE back parlor of any average American home. The blinds are drawn and a single gas-jet burns feebly. A dim suggestion of festivity: strange chairs, the table pushed back, a decanter and glasses. A heavy, suffocating, discordant scent of flowers—roses, carnations, lilies, gardenias. A general stuffiness and mugginess, as if it were raining outside, which it isn't.

A door leads into the front parlor. It is open and through it the flowers may be seen. They are banked about a long black box with nickel handles, resting upon two folding horses. Now and then a man comes into the front room from the street door, his shoes squeaking hideously. Sometimes there is a woman, usually in deep mourning. Each visitor approaches the long black box, looks into it curiously, and then backs off toward the door. A clock on the mantelpiece ticks loudly. From the street come the usual noises—a wagon rattling, the clang of a trolley-car's gong, the shrill cry of a child.

In the back parlor six pallbearers sit upon chairs, all of them bolt upright, with their hands on their knees. They are in their Sunday clothes, with stiff white shirts. Their hats are on the floor beside their chairs. Each wears upon his lapel the gilt badge of a fraternal order, with a crêpe rosette. In the gloom they are indistinguishable; all of them talk in the same strained, throaty whisper. Between their remarks they pause, clear their throats, blow their noses, and shuffle in their chairs. They are intensely uncomfortable. Tempo: Adagio lamentoso, with occasionally a rise to andante maestoso. So:

FIRST PALLBEARER

Who would have thought that *he* woulda been the next?

SECOND PALLBEARER

Yes; you never can tell.

THIRD PALLBEARER (*an oldish voice, oracularly*)

We're here today and gone tomorrow.

FOURTH PALLBEARER

I seen him no longer ago than last Chewsday. He never looked no better. Nobody would have—

FIFTH PALLBEARER

I seen him Wednesday. We had a glass of beer together in the Huffbrow Kaif. He was laughing and cutting up like he always done.

SIXTH PALLBEARER

You never know who it's gonna hit next. Him and me was pallbearers together for Hen Jackson. That wasn't

no more than a month ago, or, say, five weeks.

FIRST PALLBEARER

Well, a man is lucky if he goes off quick. If I had *my* way I wouldn't want no better way.

SECOND PALLBEARER

My brother John went thataway. He dropped like a stone, settin' there at the supper table. They had to take his knife out of his hand.

THIRD PALLBEARER

I had an uncle do the same thing, but without the knife. He had what they call appleplexy. It runs in my family.

FOURTH PALLBEARER

They say it's in *his'n,* too.

FIFTH PALLBEARER

But he never looked it.

SIXTH PALLBEARER

No. Nobody would have thought *he* woulda been the next.

FIRST PALLBEARER

Them are the things you never can tell anything about.

SECOND PALLBEARER

Ain't it true!

THIRD PALLBEARER

We're here today and gone tomorrow.

(*A pause. Feet are shuffled. Somewhere a door bangs.*)

FOURTH PALLBEARER (*brightly*)

He looks elegant. I hear he never suffered none.

FIFTH PALLBEARER

No; he went too quick. One minute he was alive and the next minute he was dead.

SIXTH PALLBEARER

Think of it: dead so quick!

FIRST PALLBEARER

Gone!

SECOND PALLBEARER

Passed away!

THIRD PALLBEARER

Well, we all have to go *some* time.

FOURTH PALLBEARER

Yes; a man never knows but what his turn'll come next.

FIFTH PALLBEARER

You can't tell nothing by looks. Them sickly fellows generally lives to be old.

SIXTH PALLBEARER

Yes; the doctors say it's the big, stout person that goes off the soonest. They say typhord fever never kills none but the healthy.

FIRST PALLBEARER

So I have heerd it said. My wife's youngest brother weighed 240 pounds. He was as strong as a mule. He could lift a sugar-barrel, and then some. Once I seen him drink damn near a whole keg of beer. Yet it finished him in less'n three weeks—and he had it mild.

SECOND PALLBEARER

It seems that there's a lot of it this fall.

THIRD PALLBEARER

Yes; I hear of people taken with it every day. Some say it's the water. My brother Sam's oldest is down with it.

FOURTH PALLBEARER

I had it myself once. I was out of my head for four weeks.

FIFTH PALLBEARER

That's a good sign.

SIXTH PALLBEARER

Yes; you don't die as long as you're out of your head.

FIRST PALLBEARER

It seems to me that there is a lot of sickness around this year.

SECOND PALLBEARER

I been to five funerals in six weeks.

THIRD PALLBEARER

I beat you. I been to six in five weeks, not counting this one.

FOURTH PALLBEARER

A body don't hardly know what to think of it scarcely.

FIFTH PALLBEARER

That's what *I* always say: you can't tell who'll be next.

SIXTH PALLBEARER

Ain't it true! Just think of *him*.

FIRST PALLBEARER

Yes; nobody woulda picked *him* out.

SECOND PALLBEARER

Nor my brother John.

THIRD PALLBEARER

Well, what must be must be.

FOURTH PALLBEARER

Yes; it don't do no good to kick. When a man's time comes he's got to go.

FIFTH PALLBEARER

We're lucky if it ain't us.

SIXTH PALLBEARER

So I always say. We ought to be thankful.

FIRST PALLBEARER

That's the way *I* always feel about it.

SECOND PALLBEARER

It wouldn't do *him* no good, no matter *what* we done.

THIRD PALLBEARER

We're here today and gone tomorrow.

FOURTH PALLBEARER

But it's hard all the same.

FIFTH PALLBEARER

It's hard on *her*.

SIXTH PALLBEARER

Yes, it is. Why should *he* go?

FIRST PALLBEARER

It's a question nobody ain't ever answered.

SECOND PALLBEARER

Nor never won't.

THIRD PALLBEARER

You're right there. I talked to a preacher about it once, and even *he* couldn't give no answer to it.

FOURTH PALLBEARER

The more you think about it the less you can make it out.

FIFTH PALLBEARER

When I seen him last Wednesday he had no more ideer of it than what you had.

SIXTH PALLBEARER

Well, if I had *my* choice, that's the way I would always want to die.

FIRST PALLBEARER

Yes; that's what *I* say. I am with you there.

SECOND PALLBEARER

Yes; you're right, both of you. It don't do no good to lay sick for months, with doctors' bills eatin' you up, and then have to go anyhow.

THIRD PALLBEARER

No; when a thing has to be done, the best thing to do is to get it done and over with.

FOURTH PALLBEARER

That's just what I said to my wife when I heard.

FIFTH PALLBEARER

But nobody hardly thought that *he* woulda been the next.

SIXTH PALLBEARER

No; but that's one of them things you can't tell.

FIRST PALLBEARER

You never know *who'll* be the next.

SECOND PALLBEARER

It's lucky you don't.

THIRD PALLBEARER

I guess you're right.

FOURTH PALLBEARER

That's what my grandfather used to say: you never know what is coming.

FIFTH PALLBEARER

Yes; that's the way it goes.

SIXTH PALLBEARER

First one, and then somebody else.

FIRST PALLBEARER

Who it'll be you can't say.

SECOND PALLBEARER

I always say the same: we're here to-day—

THIRD PALLBEARER (*cuttin' in jealously—and humorously*)

And tomorrow we *ain't* here.

(*A subdued and sinister snicker. It is followed by sudden silence. There is a shuffling of feet in the front room, and whispers. Necks are craned. The pallbearers straighten their backs, hitch their coat collars and pull on their black gloves. The clergyman has arrived. From above comes the sound of weeping.*)

MORE PURLINGS

THE man who establishes peace between capital and labor will get the nation's thanks regardless of religion or politics.—*Champ Clark.*

THE God that created the germ to kill me is the same God that created me to kill the germ.—*Gerald Stanley Lee.*

I BELIEVE that hate and injustice are of the devil. So mote it be!
—*Dr. Frank Crane.*

WHEN a mother raises a son, when she devotes her tears, her cares to him, when she lavishes her love on him, she does not want him shot up by the son of another mother.—*William Jennings Bryan.*

A SUNDAY-SCHOOL is a prison in which innocent children do penance for the evil consciences of their parents.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE CUT-OUT

By Roy Kilman

CLARKSON signaled to me and I was quick to follow him. He drove a Winton Six. It meant that I should be home in ten minutes—and I lived five miles from the club!

As I sank back into the luxurious cushions of the tonneau, there came a thunderous roar. Clarkson had opened his cut-out, and I noticed several passers-by start with nervousness. One of them, a pallid young man, whirled on his heels as if he had been shot. My friend chuckled; then the cool breeze from the sheer speed of the automobile bathed my brow.

A swarthy man, covered with hair, ran swiftly up the arroyo of a primeval cañon, with difficulty keeping in view the naked boy who sped over the rough way in advance. Had the pursuer not been able to see his offspring, he still could have kept the trail easily, for a sound emanated from the fleeing figure that fairly shattered the air.

At the cataclysmic din, insects scuttled to cover; larvæ instinctively became little individual balls and tumbled, with reckless precipitation, from the tops of tremendous trees; beautifully tinted lizards changed hue, vivid green and yellow fading insensibly to somber brown or gray as the slender bodies flattened more closely to the protecting surfaces whose colors they mimicked.

All nature seemed shocked.

The man just held his own, fierce guttural exclamations bursting from him as he panted on. Suddenly the hideous noise ceased. The nimble youth was leaping to a higher level. With wonderful swiftness he scrambled up, up, up to the projecting ledge of rock whereon was the home of the tribe of Aab.

It was midday. Quiet reigned there, for the heat was terrific and the cavemen sought rest; far back in the recesses of their caverns they slept in peace. The lad shouted gleefully and began to whirl about him a thing he carried. It was a flat, oval-shaped piece of wood fastened at the end of a long leather thong: the "bull-roarer." Presently, as the missile gained momentum, fearsome din again filled the cañon, reverberating in the narrow confines until the vibrations loosened debris on the talus below and sent it crashing to the bottom.

Past the caves sped the lad, whirling the thing and chortling as he ran. The occupants were startled into wakefulness. Small children chattered with fear and huddled in apprehensive groups; hairy hands gripped huge clubs still fresh with the blood of the morning's kill; and bearded heads, still drenched in sleep, were thrust out.

What strange monster was this to make existence more precarious? What was it that surpassed the trumpetings of the mastodon, the howl of the pachyderm, the shriek of the ichthyosaurus?

The man had snatched up a jagged piece of rock as he glided on in wily, soft-footed pursuit. In swinging his noise-producing instrument, the boy perforce lost ground; besides, he was laughing immoderately. The man began to gain. The lad slipped. Instant-

ly the man poised himself, his muscles rippling as he drew back sharply, arm upraised; then—with fatal accuracy the stone shot through the air. It struck the youth and he pitched forward at full length. Hands clenched, the man leaped upon him; but nothing more was necessary: the roar was stilled, and again all was tranquil in the home of the tribe of Aab.

Blood flowed from a gaping hole in the youth's head; at once, like a child, the man was tender. His moans mingled with those of his stricken son.

"Uk," he breathed. "Why did you seek to frighten the brothers with that godless noise?"

In the throes of death, Uk smiled.

The contrivance was his own. He had invented it but yesterday, and was proud, proud as old Gok, who nine moons before had conceived and builded a circular thing that could carry great weights easily: *the wheel.*

Uk's eyes rested an instant on his toy—it lay at his feet. Again he smiled.

"I guess," he gasped, in a final effort to make his voice audible, "it's because—I like to—see them jump."

A terrible rumble was in my ears. The cool breeze! We were home!

"Say, Clarkson," I asked sleepily as I left the car, "why do you work that infernal cut-out so much?"

On the sidewalk stood a white-haired, reverend-appearing old man; he had been startled by the roar of the cut-out and was staring at us angrily.

"Oh, I don't know," said Clarkson carelessly. "I guess it's because I like to see them jump."

SAME OLD THEME—WITH VARIATIONS

IT was the old, old story. They met, they loved to distraction. After a while he grew weary of the affection she lavished upon him. She reproached him. They quarreled. She returned his ring and presents; told him, with a burst of tears, that she never wanted to see him again, and watched his departure from the window. That night she cried herself to sleep in the orthodox way of broken-hearted maidens. He celebrated his deliverance from apron-strings by getting gloriously intoxicated.

They met after five years had elapsed; and herein this tale differs from the regulation story. He was not filled with pangs of jealousy at beholding her with other men; she felt no desire to make mean remarks about the girls whose company he sought. They didn't sit in a corner together and make pessimistic remarks anent everything in general and life in particular until they discovered that the long-dormant love for each other was what made things so blue for them. They didn't renew their engagement, with wedding-cake and the strains of the "Lohengrin March" in the near future, as the curtain falls.

They sat in a corner, it is true, but not to talk of the past—simply to bore each other telling the bright things their respective children said and did. "And here endeth the first lesson."

THE REASON WHY

By John Temple

CAROLINE had quarreled with the Williamses. To be sure, quarreling is lots of fun when you are in the middle of it, calling names, but it brings a gray time after it, and little girls who have no brothers or sisters to fall back upon in this gray time ought never to quarrel. Caroline had not a brother or a sister to her name. Strictly speaking, it might be said that the Williamses had quarreled with her, if being superior and icy and altogether nasty constitutes a quarrel. But that is a story, too, and has to be told first.

In the first place, Caroline hated clothes—dressed-up clothes, such as embroidered frocks and sashes and bows on your hair. You could not have a good time in such clothes, because you always had to think where you sat and how you sat and all such troublesome things. Caroline never did remember such injunctions, anyhow, but she honestly meant to think about it this afternoon when she had on her best red sash, and was to keep clean, because maybe Aunt Lida would arrive from Washington. And then, when she was standing aimlessly on the front steps wondering what to do, Eddie Snyder had come along with his new wagon and offered her a ride, and she had forgotten all about everything but the ride. How could anybody remember sashes when such fun as that was going on? It was after she had been up and down the hill ever so many times—more times than she could tell, and was walking up for one more ride—that the Williamses came around the corner.

"Why, Caroline Sill!" said Lilian, the eldest, in a shocked voice. "Just look at your sash!"

"It's a sight!" added Lula, while Elizabeth, who was a small human phonograph, repeated shrilly:

"Just look at it! It's a sight!"

It was a sight, too. It had come untied, certainly; it had been wrapping itself around the axle, evidently. Probably it had been wiping up the street for some time. Anyhow, the red sash, beloved of Caroline's mother, was just a blackened, greasy string.

"What will your mother say?" chorused the Williamses, enjoying, as proper people always do, the disasters that befall their less proper neighbors. And they walked off, heads in the air, their own ribbons in speckless order and virtue in their backs.

Mamma didn't say anything, after all, this time. She was lying down and she merely called Caroline over to the couch while she untied it and took it off. Then she smoothed her hair a little and said, "When Mamma feels better she will find something nicer for her little girl to do than to ride on a wagon." And that was all there was to it, as far as Caroline was concerned. Not so the Williamses, as she was to learn.

When her face had been washed and her dress smoothed out and made the best of, minus its sash—and there was still a lot of afternoon left before Papa came home—Caroline came out on the porch and saw the Williamses at play on theirs, cutting out paper dolls, so she got her box and went to join them.

The three little girls were sitting on the carpet which covered the porch floor, busy with their scissors and dolls. Their frocks were spotless, their hair ribbons were at a correct angle, their sashes were carefully preserved from

rumpling at the back. Lilian's plait hung exactly in the middle of her back. Two of Lula's curls hung over each shoulder, in the most approved fashion. Not a hair of Elizabeth's bobbed locks was out of place. They might have posed for pictures of deportment, all of them. They could not have got into a scrape to save their lives. And it was to them that up the terrace and on to the porch strode Caroline, with rumpled dress and dusty shoes, hugging her dolls and taking her welcome for granted.

The proper little girls on the porch looked up from their play and surveyed her with disfavor. Then they looked at each other in a way which said, "We know something about you." A kind of "Mene, mene, tekel"—this of childhood, which is very effective, at least among girls. Then they all looked at Lilian, as much as to say, "You tell her; you are the oldest." I forgot to say that Julia Clarke was with them. Julia had been Caroline's friend until now.

So Lilian stopped her cutting and looked icily at the intruder.

"We're not going to play with you any more, Caroline Sill. You play with boys." That was all. Then she dropped her eyes and finished cutting a doll's chin. In amazement, Caroline looked at each of the others. Their heads were all discreetly bent over their dolls. They all agreed in what Lilian had said. They weren't her friends any longer. She was no longer in good-little-girl society. The tell-tale sash had done it. She had played with boys before, but no one had found it out. This time everyone knew it. She had played with boys. Lilian's words made her mad.

"I don't care if you don't," she retorted hotly, "you nasty, mean things," and turned and ran down the steps. But when she got to the curb she had time to think of something more biting than that to say, so she turned and called out:

"You're a monkey-donkey, Lilian Williams—you and Lula and Elizabeth, and Julia Clarke, too. So there!" And switching her skirts, she turned around again and marched straight across the street home, never turning once to see how they took it, though she was dying to.

But she did not have much time to think about it, because before long Papa came home, and she forgot all about it at sight of his face. Then, too, Papa had bulging pockets to be explored, which turned out to be candy and popcorn, and then there was a romp.

Next thing they were eating supper, and after that there was a story while she sat on Papa's knee and the shadows got big and black and the birds all went to bed, so that when Mamma called out from her couch, "Come, little girl; it is time for your head to be under your wing, too," she had not thought of the Williamses once.

But afterwards, when she lay in the dark, listening idly to voices that floated up from the cool parlor below, she remembered her quarrel.

"The mean, hateful things," she said to herself, and got mad with them all over again while she said it. "I'll get even with them; see if I don't." And schemes of revenge began to cross her small brain.

"I'll have a party on the porch, where they can see it, and won't ask any of them. That's what I'll do." Only, the second thought spoiled that. Who would come to the party if she left them all out? If she only had a sister it would be the very thing to do. Instantly her vivid imagination pictured the doll table set with her tea set and loaded with popcorn and candy while she and a sister ate with relish and the hated Williamses and Julia Clarke looked on, hungry and uninvited. It would be the very thing to do if—and this was the thing—she only had a sister. How did you get a sister? she wondered. Where did they come from? Why, from heaven, of course, where you came from yourself. Did God keep them all ready up there for anybody who wanted them? The next thought made her sit up in bed with excitement. Would God send one down to her if

she prayed for it? Maybe. He *could,* of course—God could do anything. Maybe He *would.* With a jump Caroline was out of bed and down on her knees beside her little bed.

"Please, God, send me a little sister all for my own," she prayed. "I'll be good and I won't tease her, and I'll give half my toys and I won't never get mad with her. Amen," she finished, with her little hands folded close. Then she climbed back into bed, so excited she could hardly get to sleep.

The next morning, when she awoke, there was something unusual about the house. In the first place, instead of Mamma coming in to help her dress, colored Jenny was there in an awful hurry and acting as if she had something on her mind. Jenny buttoned her up the back and told her to go downstairs softly, "'Cause yo' Mamma's po'ly," she warned. When she got to the dining-room, Mamma's place at the table was empty.

"Where's Mamma, Jenny?" asked Caroline, as she pulled up her chair.

"Never you mind, honey, now. Yo' Mamma's asleep. Jes' sit up and eat yo' breakfas'. Maybe I'se got somepin' ter tell you when you's done."

"Something nice?" said Caroline, beginning to eat her oatmeal.

"I should say it am. Powerful nice," said Jenny, looking knowing.

"Tell me now, Jenny," Caroline begged, eating her breakfast in big gulps to get rid of it. It seemed so funny to be eating breakfast without Mamma at the table.

Jenny shook her head obdurately. "No, Miss, I ain't a-goin' ter tell you till you done finish' up yo' breakfas'."

At that Caroline began to eat faster than ever. Oatmeal, bread and egg all followed each other rapidly until, with a final gulp, she drained her glass of milk, pushed back her chair, jumped down and ran out to Jenny.

"Please tell me now, Jenny," she pleaded. "I'm done."

"Guess," said Jenny, her black face alive with pleasure.

"We're going to have ice-cream today," hazarded Caroline.

"Guess again," tittered Jenny. "It's nicer'n ice-cream."

"Nicer'n ice-cream?" said Caroline, wonderingly. "Why, it must be company."

"You sho' is gettin' warm," laughed Jenny. "Want ter guess again or give it up?"

"I give it up," said Caroline instantly. Riddles always teased her.

"All right, then," said Jenny. "You've got a little sister upstairs. Now I done tol' you."

"A little sister!" echoed Caroline, dazed by this quick answer to her prayer. "Why, where is she? When did she come?"

"De big angels done bring her in las' night, when you was sleepin'. Dat's what dey done. No, indeedy, you can't see her this minute! Yo' mamma's soun' asleep and you is got ter keep jus' as quiet as nothin' at all till she wake up. Den you kin go in and look at her. She sho' is a purty little thing."

And Jenny wouldn't say another word, wouldn't answer another question, but just gathered up the dishes and set about her work.

Left to herself, Caroline began to think, and think hard. God had heard her prayer and sent the little sister. That much was certain. Mamma was asleep and she had to be quiet. What could she do to pass the time away until Mamma woke up? Why, the very thing! She would get a party ready for herself and her little sister out on the porch! And she would be just as quiet! She would not make one bit of noise! In a few minutes Caroline was as busy as a bee, carrying out her doll table and dishes, setting it with candy and popcorn piled on the little plates, and in the middle of the table some ginger snaps she had begged Jenny for. On tiptoe she pulled her best chair to the table, to be ready, and her best doll in her rocking-chair, for her little sister to play with when she came downstairs. "My, it's nice!" she thought, happily, as she looked at it. Wouldn't Lilian

and the rest of them be sorry when they saw her and Rose (she had already decided to call her Rose) having such a nice party? Wouldn't they wish they weren't mad with her? Jenny called twice before she heard her. But when Jenny said, "You can go upstairs now; yo' mamma's awake," she got so excited she could hardly get upstairs properly. Jenny told her to go in by herself, and waited at the door to see the effect.

The room was dark and she couldn't see a thing at first. Then Mamma's voice, sounding very sweet and far away, said:

"Come over here, Caroline, and see your dear little sister."

Caroline tiptoed over excitedly in the direction of Mamma's voice. Mamma said something and a lady in blue with a big white apron, whom Caroline had not noticed before, pulled up the shade and let in a flood of light. Caroline saw her mother looking very strange in a nightgown in the daytime, but she didn't see the new sister. Where was she? Mamma held out her arms with the most beautiful smile Caroline ever remembered to have seen, and stroked Caroline's hair while the blue lady began to fumble with a funny little bundle on the morris chair.

"Where's my little sister, Mamma?" Caroline whispered.

Mamma nodded to the blue lady. "Here she is," she replied, as the lady came forward. Then she added, holding Caroline very, very close as she did so: "Caroline is Mamma's big girl now, and she is going to help to take care of her new little sister. Isn't she?"

"Um-hum," Caroline said, but her eyes and thoughts were on the blue lady, who was bringing the funny bundle over to Mamma. Why were they doing that? Where were they keeping her little sister hidden? But the blue lady had opened the bundle and was saying, "Peep in, little girlie."

Somehow she was frightened. Things were so strange. And the sister wasn't anywhere around. Nevertheless, she looked obediently in the bundle the blue lady was holding out to her.

Deep in a blanket lay a little red thing with tight-shut eyes and a face screwed into a hundred wrinkles. Its doubled-up fists beat the air feebly; it wasn't as big as her best doll. It heaved up and down, beat about with its fists a little, and then, all at once, gave a cry the like of which Caroline had never heard in all her young life. She was horribly frightened. She looked swiftly to her mother. Mamma was smiling the most beautiful smile Caroline ever remembered to have seen.

"Does Caroline love her dear little sister?" she asked softly, gazing at the little bundle.

This was almost too much for Caroline to bear, but there was still a hope left. She leaned heavily against her mother's arm, shrinking away from the queer, noisy bundle.

"Can she walk and talk, Mamma?" she whispered, but her mother did not see the imploring look in her eyes. A good deal hung on the answer to Caroline.

Instead, Mamma's smile deepened. She saw, in the future, baby feet, tottering and weak, looking to her for help—dear babbling speech to be treasured up and mused over. "Oh, no! Little babies do not walk and talk for ever so long," she answered, still smiling.

With that the universe caved in around Caroline's feet. *This,* then, was her little sister! She had a hard time to keep from crying, but that might hurt Mamma's feelings. The blue lady began to say something about Mamma's having to go to sleep again, but she need not have been so polite about it. Caroline did not want to stay one minute longer near that dreadful little crying bundle. She wanted to get away by herself and think it all out. Slowly and miserably she went down the stairs and sat down in her little rocker, because there was nothing else to do.

There was nothing to do, anyhow. There wouldn't be any party after all. *This* was what she had gotten out of bed to pray for; this was what she had set the table for and given her chair to—a baby that couldn't even walk or

talk! A baby that could do nothing but cry! And she had wanted a little sister so bad! The worst of it was, it was all her fault! That's what made it so hard to bear. *She had prayed that baby into the house!* She wondered tearfully, in the midst of her misery, what Papa would say when he heard about it. He had brought her all that candy and popcorn yesterday, and now she had done this. He would feel awful bad about it, she guessed. Maybe even he would be mad with her, too, when he found out why she had done it—when she told him she had prayed the baby into the house just to spite the Williamses. It gave her a lump in the throat just to think about it. What was it Papa had said about that lump? That it was badness that stuck there whenever she was naughty. "Tell on yourself," Papa had said, "and it will come out." All right, she would tell on herself, to Papa, the first minute she saw him. Why, there was Papa now, coming up the walk with some drugstore medicine in his hand. He was smiling; he could not have heard about the baby yet.

"Hello, Kidkin," said Papa. "Your nose is out of joint."

Caroline put her hand up quickly and felt it. It seemed to be all right. That made Papa laugh out loud.

"How do you like the baby?" he asked next.

That was strange. Papa had heard about the baby, and he was laughing just as if nothing had happened. She puzzled over it a minute. Maybe Papa was making out he liked it, so as not to hurt Mamma's feelings. But he didn't know yet she had got it sent here. What would he say when he found that out? It was hard, but she would do what Papa told her always to do when she was naughty—she would tell on herself.

"Papa," she said, as he came up the porch steps, "I want to tell you something—something bad, I guess," she added.

Papa set the medicine down and looked grave. "That's too bad," he said, "when Mamma's sick, too. But let's hear all about it." And he sat down on the top step and took Caroline on his knee.

Caroline pinched up some of her little pink dress between her fingers, gulped hard two or three times, looked down, looked away, gulped again, and then burst out with,

"It's all my fault, Papa!"

"What's your fault?" he asked, looking mystified.

Caroline raised her eyes to his face. It was hard, fearfully hard, but she would go on to the end. She would not keep back a single thing.

"I mean the baby," she stammered. "I prayed for a little sister last night, because Lilian and all of them were mad with me, and that's how God came to send it here. But I didn't mean a baby," she finished tearfully; "honest I didn't, Papa," she said. "And I'm awful sorry," she ended, "I prayed it into the house."

But Papa threw his head back and gave a laugh that almost scared Caroline. And he did not seem to be able to stop. She didn't know what Papa was laughing at, but he couldn't be very mad, anyhow. Caroline searched his face wonderingly. Papa lifted her off his knee and stood up. He actually had to wipe his eyes with a handkerchief, he had laughed so hard.

"So you think you prayed the baby into the house?" he teased. "Well, if you're not the limit, Kidkin!" And he began to laugh again.

Caroline smiled a little, too. It couldn't be so bad, after all, or Papa wouldn't laugh so. She would make sure though.

"Aren't you mad about the baby?" she asked timidly.

For answer Papa stooped and, lifting her, swung her high above his head, once, twice, three times.

"No, Kidkin," he said gaily; "I'm not mad about the baby—not one bit. Honest Injun. One, two, three. Look-out! You'll bump your head up there." Then he set her down. "So you prayed it into the house. Come on. Let's tell Mamma."

DELIGHTFUL LAN-FANG

By Achmed Adullah

CHING KO-OU had been brought up in the School of the Two Thousand and Two Literati, and his heart was filled with the white lore of shining wisdom. He had risen from behind the black-thundering clouds of the hardest examinations as a crimson-and-golden sun. He had written not only such light and frivolous books as "The Difference between the Tantras of the Puranic Hindus and the Quang-ho Occultism of the Mings" (Pekin, 1889, 26 volumes quarto) and "Silver-Tinkling Thoughts about Slicing as the Foremost Form of Capital Punishment," but he had published a monumental work in fifty-three folios which rejoiced in the name of "The Kabala and the Latter-Day Tsaoist Craostialism Compared with the Transcendental Puritanism of the Shankarachayra and the Chinese Holi-Enigma of the Pranayama." Finally he retired to the province of I-li, where he filled his days richly in discovering the basic conditions of human happiness and the initial causes of human sorrows.

Thus his wisdom grew until it was as broad as the Yang-tse and as height-towering as the blessed Yuang-Wa, and his queue grew in keeping with his wisdom: it was a fine, thick, black queue, and there lived not a Mandarin of the First Degree West of Pekin would could boast a longer one.

Once, at the time of the peach blossoms, he strolled into the country to make certain observations and to increase his ravenous wisdom, and he saw in front of her house delightful Lan-fang, and she was deeply in sorrow. For her pretty eyebrows, which usually stretched upwards from her eyes toward her forehead, right and left, like the tentacles of the silken-winged Ya-kan beetle, were wrinkled straight out in anger and passion; her deliciously oblique eyes brimmed with shimmering pearl-tears; her ivory teeth gnawed her cherry-red lips; and she was scratching her firm little porcelain cheeks with long, nacre finger-nails.

And Ching Ko-Ou was astonished and addressed the maiden:

"I am the Father and Mother of Wisdom. I have discovered the trickling brooks of all emotions. But my wisdom has not as yet reached the camalophitic and accentric cause of your lympidations."

Delightful Lan-fang did not understand him, and so he asked her in more vulgar phraseology about the causes of her tears. And she said:

"Illustrious Presence and Honorable Professor, above my head fluffs white-red the bloom of the peach-tree, and a yellow butterfly sips the honey from the blossoms. In my garden a jessamine bush exhales sweet and heavy odors, and amongst the waxen flowers sports and dances a dark-blue butterfly. I am a lonely virgin and my heart is full of longing."

Then Ching Klo-Ou thought for a long time, remembering all his wisdom, remembering also the principal and basic conditions of human happiness and human sorrow, and made reply:

"Delightful Lan-fang, it is said in the twenty-third volume of Wah-kyou's commentaries on the Early Wisdom of Miza Sha-fi, 'An impossible thing should not be spoken; when it happens before the eyes it is seen; a stone swims, and an ape sings a song.' It

also says in that delightful book by Mang-wo about the Bhil Traditions of the Mahabharata that he who sees a firefly often imagines he is watching a conflagration. Thus farewell, delightful Lan-fang, and dry your eyes."

He turned to go, highly pleased with himself and his wisdom, but the maiden called him back and asked him to explain to her what he meant. And he said:

"Choose a gay youth and nurse your love."

And then he walked away through the paddies, with his fine, long, black queue wound around his left arm so that it would not sweep the dust and dirt of the fields.

Soon there came along young Yat-kwo and he kissed away the sorrows of delightful Lan-fang. And then, frightened, the dark-blue butterfly flew away from the odorous jessamine bush, and one by one the white-red peach blossoms fluttered down from the tree.

A year had passed and again Ching Ko-Ou walked along the road through the paddies and again he saw delightful Lan-fang—and again the tears were running down her little porcelain cheeks. And he stopped and said:

"During the past year my wisdom has doubled and given birth to twins; but it has not yet reached the bourne of the understanding of your sorrow. Why do you weep, delightful Lan-fang?"

And she replied, sighing:

"Oh honored Professor, Yat-kwo is untrue to me."

But the wise Ching Ko-Ou meditated for a long time and replied:

"A man should root out an enemy by another enemy called in to aid, just as he would take out a thorn in the foot by a thorn in the hand. Also, Kong-fu-tse declared that a fox does not wag his tail in the lion's den."

And asked to interpret his wisdom, he said:

"You must marry me after divorcing Yat-kwo, oh delightful Lan-fang."

And he embraced her, once with his arms and thrice with his nice, long, black queue; and soon afterwards they were man and wife.

And again the dark-blue butterfly flew out of the jessamine bush, but this time no white-red blossoms fluttered down from the peach-tree.

After Ching Ko-Ou had increased his wisdom for another year, he went on a long journey to study Life; and on his return he discovered his wife, delightful Lan-fang, more sorrowful than she had ever been before. And so he spoke to her in an angry voice:

"Shame on you! You are a foolish child. Today my wisdom has reached the pinnacle, and everything human is clear to me. And so I know positively that there can be no reason for your sorrow and tears."

But delightful Lan-fang replied:

"Oh honored husband, indeed you are wrong; for again Yat-kwo has been untrue to me."

IF the pictures look like her, Cæsar's wife was above suspicion, all right!

IN spite of his epigrams, Oscar Wilde achieved fame. That's something no other epigrammatist will ever again be able to do.

HARLEQUIN-AT-LARGE

By Durbin Rowland

THIS is the plain tale of Harlequin, whose caprice led him to work a wonder. Of course it was unintentional; he was not at all serious in the matter. But he did it, nevertheless.

Ordinarily there was little in life to interest Harlequin save the crackers and figs that decked his perch, the occasional passages-at-arms with his spirited master, and the daily interview with the lofty individuals who came to sit for their portraits in his master's much-frequented New York studio. One other thing gave him pleasure. At times M. Barbouille, the master, forsook his Muse and departed, leaving Harlequin all alone in the great, silent atelier. Then it was that the gorgeous bird shook out his green and gold feathers and left his high perch to make a tour of the apartment and to inspect all the bright and interesting things that lay about in profusion.

On one such occasion Harlequin made some unusual additions to his annals. Near noontide of a mild day in December, 1845, M. Barbouille received a message and started away in haste, pausing a moment at the portal to bid his solemn-looking parrot behave himself. But Harlequin had a will of his own. As soon as all was still he quitted his perch and fell to exploring. In a short while he had given himself over to the serious contemplation of serious objects that adorned a great mahogany table, more particularly three blue china jars, a fat, long-necked bottle containing a quantity of ruby-red liquid, a slender-stemmed goblet containing some more of the same, a sheaf of brushes, their bristles caked over with crummy oils; a shallow crystal basin filled with a murky solution of India ink, and here and there dead ashes of tobacco and scraps of paper and cloth. Harlequin regarded this still-life group with the eyes of a critic.

Out of the assortment the ruby-red liquid in the tall goblet proved the most attractive. Harlequin hopped around and around, gazing unceasingly into the rosy chalice. The more he gazed the more his wonder grew. The spell of the dancing, flaring liquid moved him beyond measure. And, all in a moment, hovering a little too near and giving his wing a sudden ecstatic flirt, Harlequin brought catastrophe. The wine-glass toppled over, rolled to the edge of the table and disappeared with a crash.

The parrot was a victim of the deluge. The cloying wine drenched his feathers and adhered to his toes in a most disagreeable manner. He experimented: and he discovered that he could best remove the liquid by taking it up in little sips. So he drew off to a dry spot and set to work. The task was so delightful that, having once accomplished a renovation, he returned to dabble his feet in the puddle and start all over again. Beside benefiting his toes the process warmed Harlequin's stomach. In time it affected even his topknot; an agitation in that quarter made the bird hopelessly dizzy. The liquid was fast gumming over his wings, and Harlequin cast about in search of further relief. Presently he floundered into the basin of India ink. The waters were muddy, but they were cool and soothing. The deeper he sank the blacker he grew. However, Harlequin was too busily engaged in spatter-

ing and chuckling to himself to take note of the metamorphosis.

At last, having finished the tubbing, he felt much refreshed. In fact he was ready, he thought, for another little sip of the ruby-red liquid; and he started in quest of it. In the studio of M. Barbouille there was a certain spot where the polished top of the mahogany table terminated and space began. Harlequin chanced on that spot; the force of gravity was exerting itself as usual. The bird lay on the floor a long while, crumpled, black and miserable like a fallen angel. He was beginning to dose when the unexpected key clicked in the latch. It was the sweeping-lady, broom in hand. Harlequin revived in an instant.

"*Nom d'un chien!*—I am a little *de trop* here," he remarked, huskily, to himself, falling into the vernacular of his master.

Therefore, at a moment when the sweeping-lady happened to be looking the other way, the bird dragged his ink-stained form to the threshold and deliberately tumbled down into the street.

Some lilac bushes in a small park across the way looked inviting. They were bare of leaves; the slanting rays of the sun had full play down through the branches. There seemed to be many good perches. Flight for some reason seemed strangely impossible, and Harlequin found it necessary to hop over the furrows of mud in order to gain the little lilac thicket. Once there, he succeeded in mounting one of the low branches and in keeping his perch despite topheaviness until slumber came again to relieve him of all care.

When Harlequin awoke the sun had disappeared from view. A cold wind swept down the darkening way, creeping into his feathers and making him feel very desolate. When the stars began to appear a man with a ladder came that way and lit the lamp that topped a post near at hand. This, Harlequin thought, was a great kindness. The light was so bright and inviting that the bird made his way toward it, hopping at first, then cautiously trying his wings. In circling about the globe Harlequin took notice of an iron arch-piece from which the weather-shield was suspended. After three attempts he made this metal bar his roosting-place. It was first-rate up there, after he once got settled. There was enough warmth in the iron to bring life back to his aching feet; the delicious heat, rising about him, fanned and dried his inky feathers and made him snug and comfortable. He rested there late into the night, long after the street was quiet.

He might have remained till dawn had not a belated pedestrian happened by. The belated looked up, saw Harlequin, and called him a darned crow. Which was an insult. Then he raised his cane and let it fly. The head of the nightstick swung about and crashed through the globe of the lamp. Harlequin tumbled violently from his perch. A moment later the wind rushed in and blew out the flame.

After that all was dark and silent. Cold and fear pierced Harlequin to the heart, and urged him onward in the night toward nowhere. He slipped between the pickets of a fence, dragged himself over a frosty stretch of grass, and floundered in a pile of leaves where the rose bushes had been mulched for the winter. At last he saw a new gleam far away through the thicket of slender branches, a horizontal shaft of light which came from a crack under some door. What power remained he employed now in rushing blindly toward this gleam, like Don Quixote toward the windmill. Coming up. headlong, he bumped hard against the panels and made such a flutter that someone within was attracted. The door opened—a stern, silent figure stood in the light. Harlequin was filled with alarm at his own daring, and he slipped quickly down into the shadow of the step. The door was closed again. A moment later, urged on by the stinging cold, Harlequin renewed his attack, flinging himself this time against a low latticed window. This in turn flew open as impetuously as had the door a few moments past.

"Now or never!" Harlequin murmured to himself, realizing that the psychological moment was at hand.

Thus determined, Harlequin hopped in, briskly shook out his feathers, and cast a quick glance about in quest of a perch. The outline of some ornament was half revealed in the shadows above the doorway; up to it he flew. There he installed himself, looked down, and reflected.

The chamber was a small one, with sombre furnishings and scant illumination. The sole occupant was a man of melancholic mien who chewed the end of his quill pen and now and then ran his fingers through his hair. This much Harlequin remarked as slowly he revived and sadly ruminated. Remorse took hold of him, remorse for having drunk of the ruby liquid, for having bathed in ink, for having run away, and for having entered the abode of one who seemed so cheerless. Then, suddenly, there entered his head the expression invariably used by his good master, M. Barbouille, in like moments of compunction. "Never again,"—that was his phrase—"never again." Harlequin thought of this and nothing else. Therefore, when the melancholy host began to address him in tones that were stately and solemn, Harlequin responded with what was foremost in his mind: "Never again!"

This had a tremendous effect on the host. He was startled. It was only after some while spent in half-audible meditation that he recovered sufficiently to take up a fresh sheet of paper and begin to write slowly and thoughtfully. At intervals he raised his eyes and put a new question to the bird in a deep, sad voice. Each time Harlequin replied: "Never again." It seemed to be just what the mournful one desired. So the man continued writing, questioning, chewing his quill and running his fingers through his black locks, agitated one moment, calm the next, and always grimly earnest. Harlequin answered ever, "Never again." Nor did he become exercised when his interlocutor called him "Raven, Prophet, Thing of Evil" and other names. Harlequin thought that the worst of these epithets was more to his liking than that of "Darned Crow."

Just as the candlelight began to fail this strange business came to an end. The writer dropped his quill, rose in his place, and with careful gesture read his way impressively through the several sheets of his newly-completed manuscript. At the tragic final he tottered back into his chair, a crumpled heap, forgetful of all things. Harlequin, a sleepy witness to all this, became suddenly enlightened.

"Well, devil take me!" he mused to himself. "If I haven't fallen in with our neighbor, the poet fellow. And won't the master laugh when he finds out where I've been!"

Still chuckling, he tucked his weary head under his wing. At that moment the candle flame sputtered and died out, leaving the chamber black and silent as a tomb.



IN THE NEXT NUMBER OF SMART SET

"The Funeral King," by Robert Vale, a comic novelette with an undertaker for its hero.

THE MAN WHO STOLE KING SOLOMON'S GIRL

By Nelson Ayres

NOW it came to pass in the ninth year of the reign of Solomon, son of David, that the King sat in the gate of the King's house, which is in Jerusalem. And one cried unto him and said: Justice! my Lord, oh King, justice!

And the King answered and said unto him: Speak what is in thy heart.

And he came and bowed himself before the King and said: From a child, O King, thy servant hath been betrothed in marriage unto Jeholah, the daughter of Masnos, the son of Rehuel of the tribe of Judah. We played in the fields together like young kids, and ate together from the same dish, and we were as of one soul. And behold, my heart cleaveth to the damsel. And lo, this day Masnos the son of Rehuel her father, hath broken his covenant, and hath sold the maiden to a stranger for money, and she shall be taken from mine eyes to a far country.

Then Solomon the King spoke unto him and said: Who art thou, young man?

And he answered and said: Thy servant is Michmal, the son of Reuben, the son of Latzar of the tribe of Benjamin.

Then the King commanded that Reuben, the son of Latzar, and Masnos the son of Rehuel, and Jeholah his daughter, and the stranger, to whom her father had sold her, should be brought before the King.

So word came to Jeholah that she should make haste and array herself to appear before the King, and Jeholah was glad exceedingly, and she made haste, and bathed herself, and put on fine linen cunningly wrought with colors of needlework, and painted her eyelids, and plaited her hair with strands of silver and pearls, and put on all the jewels that she had. For she said in her heart: Peradventure the King shall behold my beauty and his heart shall be entangled. For who is there to know the beauty of woman as he that hath three hundred wives and seven hundred concubines? And may it not be that he shall love me, and set me above them all? And am I not young and fair above all women?

And so they stood before the King, even Reuben and Michmal his son, and Masnos and Jeholah his daughter and the stranger. And the King beheld them, and his sight dwelt upon Jeholah, whom he had caused to remove her veil, and lo, she was passing fair—more beautiful than all the daughters of Israel. So he gazed upon her and could not cease, and his heart was troubled within him. And Jeholah looked upon his eyes, and smiled, and cast down her eyes upon the ground: for she was the daughter of her mother.

And at the last the King spoke, and he said: Thou art Masnos son of Rehuel of the tribe of Judah, and thou hast sold this thy daughter into the hand of the stranger, after thou hadst covenanted to give her in marriage unto Michmal the son of Reuben of the tribe of Benjamin.

And Masnos answered and said: My Lord the King mistaketh the matter. This Reuben and myself were fellow-servants unto thy father, even unto

David the King. And it came to pass that when David the King did fight against the Jebusites and capture their city, even this Jerusalem, thy servants fought at his side. And we were both wounded that we were nigh unto death. And the King thy father did reward us, and gave unto us each a house together upon the wall of the city. And we two were as brethren, and we covenanted together, as foolish young men are wont, that our children should be married one to another that we might be as one family, while yet we had no children, nor wives. Now it has come to pass in the fullness of years, that thy servant hath been blessed of the Lord and increased in substance; while this Reuben hath wasted his goods, and possesseth not even the house which David the King gave unto him. And as for this left-handed son of Belial, even Michmal, he is no more than a laborer in my vineyards. And shall he indeed have to wife the daughter of my flesh, and inherit my possessions? The thing is absurd, as my Lord the King will seeth. Then the King said unto him: And thou hast therefore sold thy daughter to this stranger for money.

And Masnos answered and said: Not so, my Lord O King, but he hath given me a present of three hundred shekels of silver that she may be given to wife unto a great lord of Egypt.

Then Michmal the son of Reuben waxed exceeding wroth, and cried aloud, and said: The thing is false, O King, for he hath sold her that she may be carried into the land of Ashur, even to Babylon, and sold into the worst of slavery. And it shall not be while I live. She is my wife by the covenant made by our fathers, else the blood of Masnos be upon his own head.

Then the King spake unto Reuben the son of Latzar and asked him of the truth of these things and Reuben answered and said: It is true, O King, that a covenant of brotherhood is between us—even Masnos and thy servant, and we swore by the God of Israel that our children, if any there were, should be given each to each in marriage. But Masnos hath greatly prospered, whether of the Lord or no, I cannot tell, but now he possesseth mine house and mine inheritance, and all that was mine; and I and my house have become to him as hewers of wood and drawers of water.

Then the King said: And what sayeth Jeholah to these things? Then Jeholah covered her mouth, and spake unto the King and said: Oh my Lord King, thine hand maiden is in a sore strait. If I be sold unto the stranger, I shall be in the land of bondage, and I know not what afflictions await me: and if I be left in my father's house, he will surely beat me and evil entreat me: and if I be delivered into the hand of Michmal, I shall eat the bread of toil, and drink the waters of poverty. I pray thee, O my Lord King, in thy wisdom to deliver me from this evil strait. And she lifted up her voice and wept.

Then the King comforted her, and said: Fear not, beautiful daughter of Judah, for no harm shall come nigh thee, neither shalt thou have any cause for tears.

And he spake and said: Thou, O stranger, forasmuch as thou wouldest enslave a free daughter of Israel, shalt thyself be sold into bondage, and all that thou hast, and the proceeds shall be covered into the King's treasury.

And he said: Thou, Masnos, son of Rehuel, because thou hast sold that which was not thine, but by covenant pertained unto Michmal the son of Reuben, therefore thou shalt render unto him double, according to the law of Moses, and shalt pay into the hand of Michmal six hundred shekels of silver. And forasmuch as thou hast broken the covenant sworn by the God of Israel unto thy fellow-servant Reuben the son of Latzar, thou shalt render up to him his house and his inheritance, which thou holdest, and unto the half of thy goods.

And furthermore, because thou hast wrought folly in Israel, and broken the law of Moses, which saith, Thou shalt not give thy daughter to the son of the

stranger, therefore the rest of thy possessions shall be covered into the King's treasury, and thy daughter Jeholah shall abide in the King's house.

And he said: Behold, I have spoken. Let these things be done. And it was so. And Jeholah was led into the King's house and given into the hands of the keeper of the women. And she was glad, and rejoiced exceedingly. But Michmal went down to his father's house. And he was wroth, and his heart within him was on fire, and he said within himself: Shall I be given six hundred shekels of silver, and lose Jeholah, to whom thousands of gold are not to be compared? And he swore a great oath and said: As I live and as Jehovah liveth, it shall not be. Jeholah is mine, and mine she shall be. Not Shlomo himself shall have her.

And he drew near unto his mother, and communed with her, and said: My mother.

And she said: Here am I, my son.

And he said: Thou lovest me, my mother, and thou knowest that I love Jeholah the daughter of Masnos, and she is mine by the covenant of our fathers. And behold she is taken into the house of Solomon, the King.

And she said: It is even as thou sayest, my son, and my heart is heavy for thee; but what can we do? For Shlomo is very great, and who can dispute his will?

And Michmal said: That can I! And I pray thee, my mother, to help me. Now the evening cometh, and thou shalt go to Jeholah, even into the King's house. And thou shalt seem in great haste and distress: thou shalt rend thy garments, and cast dust upon thy head, and lament aloud, crying: Ah, my sister! And thou shalt say unto Jeholah: Lo, thy mother is of a sudden very sick, and like to die; and she calleth for thee, and will not be comforted until she see thee.

And his mother said unto Michmal: Whereunto tendeth that, my son? Why should I so distress Jeholah? And he said: Surely Jeholah doth love her mother, and she will make haste to come to her, and she will come forth out of the King's house.

And his mother said: Yea, but she mayeth not come forth alone, for the keeper of the women will surely send with her some of the King's eunuchs, with weapons in their hands.

And Michmal laughed aloud, and said: What is an eunuch more or less? The King hath many and to spare. Do thou but bring her outside of the walls of the King's house and I, even I, will attend to the rest.

And she wept more, and said: Alas, thou wilt be slain, my son! and she besought him to forego his plan; but he would not hear.

And at last his mother did as he commanded, and so it came to pass that Jeholah came forth from the King's gate in haste and weeping. And it was dark. And there came with her two great eunuchs with weapons and torches to attend her. And Michmal stood by the gate as one that waited for his mother.

And when the gate was shut behind them, it came to pass that Michmal drew near, and fell upon them, and smote them once, and slew them. And there was no weapon in his hand.

And when Jeholah screamed as in great fear, he smote her upon the jaw with his fist, so that she fell upon the ground as one dead, and her senses departed from her.

And Michmal took her in his arms and fled, and ran swiftly unto his father's house. Now the house was upon the wall of the city. And Michmal took a rope, and bound it about Jeholah, and did let her down by a window unto the ground outside the wall. And he descended by the rope in haste, and laid her upon his shoulder, and fled away upon his feet, and his mother drew up the rope and hid it in the house, and wept sore for her son, and would not be comforted, for she said: Shlomo will surely find him and kill him: for what can be hid from the eyes of the King?

Now Michmal was strong exceedingly and fleet of foot as the beast that

leapeth over the mountains; and he fled away and went all night toward the great sea. But when the morning was come, he came to a lodge of the vineyards. Now the time of grapes was not yet, and there was no man there. And Michmal entered the lodge and set Jeholah upon her feet, for her senses had long since returned unto her, but as yet neither of them had spoken a word.

And he said: Abide thou here, while I go to the village beyond us and buy food.

And Jeholah said: I will not abide for thee, for I hate thee.

And I will not obey thee.

And he said: It were better for thee that thou obey me; for thou art my wife, and I will surely find thee, whithersoever thou goest. And why should I strike thee again?

And she said: Strike me not for thy hand is like unto iron. And lo, I will abide here.

So Michmal made haste to the village, and returned again with bread and dates and wine in his hand; and they did eat and drink together and were strengthened. And Michmal said: Lie down and sleep, for thou art weary, and this night we may not abide here. And she lay down, but she wept, and slept not.

And Michmal said: Woman, why weepest thou? Art thou in pain? And she said: Nay, but thou lovest me not, for thou didst smite me sore, and my face is swollen and my jaw is broken all to pieces.

And Michmal swore unto her, and said: As the Lord God of Israel liveth, I do love thee as mine own soul, and thou art mine, thou art the apple of mine eye, and what a strait was I in that I must smite thee, or lose thee, when thou didst scream to bring the King's watch upon me?

And she said: How exceedingly strong thou art! Mine eyes did behold when thou smotest that great eunuch with thy bare fist, and his brazen helmet was crushed and the blood and the brains gushed forth, and I feared thee so that scream I must. And alas, that dreadful blow must have hurt thine hand. Let me see it.

And he gave his hand unto her, and lo, the skin of the knuckles was broken, and the blood was dried upon it, and she cried: Alas, alas! poor hand! And she wept upon it and kissed it. And he said, Jeholah, dost thou love me?

And she said: No, I hate thee, for thou didst smite me cruelly, and hast not kissed the place to make it well. And she kissed his hand again.

Now when night was come, they went on together toward the great sea. And Jeholah said: I cannot walk, for the way is rough, and thou must carry me in thine arms as thou didst last night. And he laughed and took her in his arms and went on with her.

And presently she said: I pray thee, my lord, set me on my feet again. And he did so.

And she took him up in her arms laughing, as he had been a child. And she said: Last night thou didst carry me, but tonight it is my turn to carry thee, that thou mayest know that I am strong, and fit to be the wife of the most mighty man in all Israel.

And she bore him a mile, and kissed him and set him down, and said: So will I carry thy children in my arms, but thou art too heavy for a child. So they went on through the night, and laughed and played like two children. And they came to Sidon on the sea and dwelt there.

Now after these days it came to pass that Benaiah, the son of Jehoida, captain of the King's hosts, came and stood before Solomon the King of Jerusalem, and he said: My Lord O King, it is come to mine ears that Michmal, son of Reuben of the tribe of Benjamin, who slew two of the King's eunuchs, and carried away the King's concubine, dwelleth securely in Sidon, and the woman with him. If it be thy will, thy servant shall go and fall upon him that he die, and thy concubine shall be returned to thine house, for this is a shameful thing that he hath done unto the King.

And the King answered and said: Is

he not a mighty man of valor, and youthful withal! And Benaiah said: True, O King, he hath the strength of a horse, and the heart of a lion, but it shall not avail him. And the King said: Nay, thou shalt not kill him, for the valor of a man is better for a King than the beauty of a woman. This shalt thou do. Thou shalt take men with thee, and shalt go and speak unto the King of Sidon, and say unto him: Thus sayeth Solomon, King, send me, I pray thee, my servants, even Michmal and Jeholah, unharmed, by the hand of my servant Benaiah, and there shall be peace between us.

And it was so. Now the King of Sidon feared Michmal—for he was a great man, and strong exceedingly—and he used deceit with him, and came upon him unawares with many men, and took him, and bound him and delivered him into the hand of Benaiah, with Jeholah his wife: and he brought them to Jerusalem, and set them before the King.

And Solomon said: What hath thou to answer for thyself, Michmal, son of Reuben, that thou didst slay my servants with the sword, and didst carry away captive the King's concubine?

Then Jeholah made haste to speak and to make answer for Michmal, and she said: May the King in his wisdom pardon his hand maiden, but the matter is not so. Surely I was never thy concubine but the wife of thy servant Michmal according to the covenant of my father Masnos. And is it not the law of Moses that a man may take his own? And no sword was in the hand of Michmal to slay the eunuchs, the King's servants. He wrought but with his naked hand, as mine eyes did see, even the strong hand of the mightiest son of Benjamin. And I beseech my Lord the King to turn away his anger from my husband in this thing, for why will the King take away my glory from my head this day? And Jeholah rent her garments and lifted up her voice and wept aloud.

And the King marvelled, and said within himself: Verily! setteth the wind in this quarter! And he spake and said: Woman, said I not unto thee that thou shouldst have no cause for tears? Therefore now, Michmal, thou son of Benjamin, depart in peace unto thine house, and take unto thy bosom Jeholah thy wife, and entreat her well, for her price is above rubies. And behold her dower shall be the half part of her father Masnos' possessions, which hath been forfeit unto the King's treasury. And forasmuch as thou art a mighty man of valor, and bold, not fearing the King's wrath, behold, if thou wilt, thou shalt stand before me as lieutenant unto Benaiah, the captain of the King's host.

And they both, even Michmal and Jeholah, bowed themselves to the ground before the King, and they said: May the King live forever!

Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, and his wisdom, and the things that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the Kings?



THE way to hold a husband is to keep him a little bit jealous. The way to lose him is to keep him a little bit more jealous.

A FOLLY is something to enjoy while it lasts and to laugh at after it is past.

THERE are innumerable ways for a woman to capture a man, but the best of them all is to tempt him ever so discreetly.

A PECULIARITY of women's tears is that women themselves can see through them. But men, alas, cannot!

THE SINCEREST FORM OF FLATTERY

By Harold Susman

COSMO DEANE made a great name for himself as an epigrammatist. He had always spent more time in reading books than in playing games. As a boy he had not played ball, and as a man he did not play cards. At school he had read Chesterfield and La Rochefoucauld instead of "Tom Brown" and "Black Beauty." At college he had read Wycherley and Congreve instead of Rex Beach and Jack London.

At college he spent more time in the library than in the gymnasium. Instead of trying for the track team, he contributed to the amateur periodicals. He wrote essays. He wrote them in the style of his favorite authors. Their publication attracted some attention.

On leaving college he declined to go into his father's business, and decided to bring out a book. He did so at his own expense. The volume consisted of a collection of essays. It was entitled "Nevertheless." And it made an instantaneous and tremendous success.

A year later he followed his essays with a novel. The story glittered with paradoxes as a Christmas tree glitters with candles. It was entitled "The Heart of Hermione." His reputation was not alone sustained—it was considerably increased.

Another year later he followed his novel with a play. In it he held the mirror up to art instead of to nature. It was entitled "The Impossible Mrs. Pelham." The piece was the hit of the season. The house was sold out for weeks in advance. Cosmo Deane was hailed as the successor of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and "The Impossible Mrs. Pelham" was hailed as the successor of "The School for Scandal."

As a boy at school Cosmo had never romped with the other boys. As a youth at college he had never chummed with the other youths. And at the time of his triumphs as an essayist, a novelist and a dramatist he had no friends and few associates. He had never cared for men and women. He had cared only for books and plays. Men and women had never cared for him. He said such brilliant, bitter, biting things.

But, after his great dramatic success, he met Cora Belden. Or rather, Cora Belden met him. She was the only daughter of a great millionaire, and she had gone in for Bohemia rather than for society. She was small and slender, with a white face and black hair. She wore magnificent clothes and was exceedingly vain. She was twenty-seven years of age and had never married.

The whole world was talking about Cosmo Deane and his epigrams, and Cora Belden decided that it would be worth her while to marry such a man. So she angled for him, and he was straightway captured.

Cosmo had never known love. He had never even known friendship. When this woman told him that she loved him, and gave ample evidence of such feeling, he in turn fell in love with her. In fact, he fell deeply, desperately in love with her. They went to Sicily for their honeymoon, to a villa at Taormina.

Cosmo stopped saying clever things, and started saying sincere ones. He stopped talking in paradoxes, and started talking in platitudes. Morning, noon and night he whispered to his wife: "I love you! I love you! I love you!" And she, who had only married him because of his reputation as a wit, wearied of his devotion as a husband, and urged him to write. He tried to do so, but failed in the attempt. She kept on urging, and he kept on trying, but kept on failing. She quarreled with him on that account.

A year after the marriage had taken place she left him, and he committed suicide by blowing out his brains. The tragedy occurred in the summer, at their villa at Trouville.

That is the history of Cosmo Deane, the famous epigrammatist. His bones are in a grave in an out-of-the-way cemetery, but his books are on the shelves of the great libraries, and he has a multitude of readers throughout the world.

Among these readers was a young man, a mere youth, named Roger Cliffe. Like Cosmo Deane, Roger Cliffe did not care at all for games, but cared a great deal for books. Like Cosmo, he did not care for travel and adventure, but did care for paradox and epigram. Roger, too, read Chesterfield and La Rochefoucauld, Wycherley and Congreve. And then he read Cosmo Deane. Roger took to Cosmo as a duck takes to water. Here were thoughts and expressions that at once appealed to him.

Roger read and re-read the essays, the novel and the play. He read nothing else. He became fascinated, obsessed. And then, still under the spell, he started to write, to see what he himself could do. Just as Cosmo had copied these others, so Roger copied Cosmo. He started in with the essays. He tried to think as Cosmo had thought, to write as Cosmo had written. And he succeeded surprisingly well.

He submitted an essay to a magazine. The essay was accepted, and the editor asked for more. Others were sent in and were promptly paid for. After three had been printed Roger included them in a book for which he had readily found a publisher. The volume was called "Notwithstanding." It was a success. In fact, it was just as much of a success as had been Cosmo's collection, called "Nevertheless."

A year later he brought out a novel. As one critic said, it was not alone a brilliant piece of writing—it was a brilliant piece of copywriting. It was called "The Soul of Sebastian." It created a sensation. In fact, it created just as much of a sensation as had Cosmo's novel, "The Heart of Hermione."

Another year later he produced a play. It did not appeal to hearts, but it certainly did appeal to heads. It was called "Temperamental Mrs. Thedford." It was a triumph. In fact, it was even more of a triumph than had been Cosmo's play, "The Impossible Mrs. Pelham."

Just as Cosmo had been hailed as the successor of Sheridan, so now Roger was hailed as the successor of Cosmo. He became recognized as the greatest living epigrammatist. He acquired this reputation, not by attempting to think of things for himself, but by attempting to think of things that Cosmo had thought of, or would have thought of. He did not desire to be anything more than a shadow, a reflection, a reproduction of Cosmo Deane.

Roger took possession of the apartment Cosmo had occupied prior to his marriage. He obtained many of Cosmo's belongings, chairs and tables and odds and ends, including the bed Cosmo had slept in and the desk he had sat at. He would have cultivated Cosmo's friends, too, if Cosmo had had any friends. But Cosmo had had no friends. And Roger had none either. He had never had a companion, never had a sweetheart.

As a celebrity, Roger now received many letters from strangers, men and women who wanted him to go here and there and do this and that. He paid no attention to any of these communications until at last one came from Cora Belden Deane, Cosmo's widow.

She said that she had read Roger's books, and had seen his play, and would like to meet him. He answered this letter at once. An appointment was made. And they met.

Mrs. Deane was as vain as ever. She had married Cosmo because he had been a celebrated writer. Now Cosmo was dead, and here was a young man who was just as celebrated as Cosmo had been, if not more so. Her first attempt had been a failure. Why should not a second attempt be a success? She was known as the widow of a celebrity. Why should she not be known as the wife of another one?

Mrs. Deane angled for Roger as she had angled for Cosmo, and she captured him just as easily. They were married and they went to Sicily for their honeymoon, to the villa at Taormina. Mrs. Cliffe was no more in love with Roger than she had been with Cosmo, but she seemed to be strange and subtle, and she made herself mysterious and seductive. Roger, who had mimicked Cosmo's thinking and writing, mimicked his loving also, and fell as deeply, as desperately in love with this woman as Cosmo had done. And, like Cosmo, when he started loving, he stopped writing.

His wife urged him to write. He tried to do so. He failed in the attempt. She quarreled with him on that account. The same performance was gone through that had been gone through before, under the same conditions and in the same surroundings. The situation was really more curious than anything Cosmo or Roger had ever conceived in their persistent quest of the paradoxical.

Within a year of the marriage his wife left him, and Roger committed suicide. He blew out his brains. He used the same revolver Cosmo had used. His wife had given it to him. This took place in the villa at Trouville, where Cosmo had ended his life.

Mrs. Deane-Cliffe, as the lady now calls herself, is widely known as the widow of two celebrated writers, but she is still vain and is still unsatisfied. She recently read a criticism of a new book by a new writer, in which the style of the young author was compared with that of Cosmo Deane and Roger Cliffe. She secured a copy of the book, a collection of epigrammatic essays, and smiled to herself as she read the sentences and recognized the inspiration. Then she sat down and wrote to the author. She said that she would be pleased to make his acquaintance. When she handed the letter to her maid there was a strange expression about her eyes and lips. She was wondering. . . .

DAYS

By K. W. Baker

SOME days, my thoughts are just cocoons; all cold and dull and blind,
They hang from dripping branches in the gray woods of my mind.

And other days, the drift and shine—such free and flying things!
I find the gold-dust in my hair, left by their brushing wings.

THANKSGIVING DAY: a day devoted by persons with inflammatory rheumatism to thanking God that it is not hydrophobia.

THE HOUSE IN THE SANDS*

By Dolf Wyllarde

ALL day and all day the wind came over the desert from nowhere and sang in the parkinsonia trees, rocking the nests of the golden oriole and making "Prince of Wales' feathers" of the date palms. The golden clusters of flowers on the parkinsonias were one shade lighter than the breast of the oriole, and as he swung and clung to the branches he looked like a brighter and more beautiful blossom. Sometimes the great vultures wheeled overhead, and the velvet bees, as big as humming-birds, came there too, for there is more life in the desert than camels and Arabs; but the oriole was really the king of the Bungalow, and he resented intrusion. He built his nests with the house-door underneath for his own accommodation, and not with views to a family. Indeed, there were seldom eggs there, though the golden birds crept in every night for shelter from the chill which came with sundown, and slept in the porch over their house-doors.

The Little Nurse loved the orioles, and looked on them as her special friends. There were pigeons over the way, belonging to the House in the sands, but they never came to the Bungalow, preferring the thatched roof of the servants' quarters and such food as the camel-drivers gave them. The House in the Sands was very large and the Mission Bungalow was quite small, but from the verandah of the Bungalow, which was two-storied, the Little Nurse could see the flat roof of the House and its white coping amongst the date palms, and she dreamed dreams. It had a wonderful garden, so large and so beautiful that it could not have flourished in the desert save for the wells at Golgotha, and looking in through the gates she had seen the date palms dusty with moonlight, and the behindis with their lilac-like foliage over long, dim walks leading to imagined haunts of beauty. There was no green thing under the trees—not a blade of grass or a ground creeper—nothing but the baked and naked earth. But in the mysterious twilight made by the close ranks of the trees the brown dust was more harmonious than vegetation, and above it the date palms made a rustling roof. In her dreams she filled the garden with pleasant people, who asked her to tennis, and laughed and chattered over tea in the familiar English fashion, and there were cool, clean rooms and punkahs. If some miracle had happened, and a young married couple had come to live there (she always thought of them as belonging to the Army, that being the least remote from possibility), she fancied she would have been perfectly happy in their companionship.

It was by no means so in reality. The House belonged to a rich Arab named Haroun Ali, a young man who sometimes came there himself for a week, or more often let it to parties from Aden. In either case there would be a score of women who came first, and the nights were noisy and horrible. The nurses' Bungalow stood on the other side of the road, behind its own mud walls, and as they had to rise at five they generally went to bed at nine, for they worked hard all day in the heat. There was no one in the Bungalow save the Big Nurse and the Little Nurse and the Somali servants, but long after the Big Nurse had gone sensibly to sleep the Little Nurse was

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guilty of creeping out of her bed on the verandah and looking out across the desert in the moonlight to talk to her own heart. There was no one else to talk to, for her Order was taciturn though not forbidden speech, and the conversation of the Fraternity was limited to requests for bandages and sterilized knives in the little theater of the hospital, or for bread at meals. The desert, on the contrary, had a thousand voices. It spoke to the Little Nurse when the wind blew—all day and all day—and out of the silence of the moonlight when its far horizon seemed to lead to Nowhere and to invite her to come out and look. Her thoughts ran on and on over the sands and the camel-thorns, past the British boundary line and the Arab villages, beyond the caravan tracks into the middle desert, and there her spirit had room in the moonlight, and lost the world and Somewhere. It was Nowhere in the desert, and there were neither laws nor duties. . . . But at this point the Little Nurse called home her thoughts, like soldiers to sentry her soul, and crept back to her bed under the white veil of the mosquito curtain.

The Arabs of Golgotha were very poor, much poorer than those of Sheiks Othman or Dala. Many of them had lost God's gift of reason and wandered in darkness, tormented by their own delusions, though harmless to their fellowmen. Some of them were lepers, and there were few who were sound of mind and body. It was because of their great need that the English Order of St. Barnabas of Pity sent out their trained Brothers to work without reward or payment, offering the best and most skilful that they possessed for the glory of God, since they got none of men. Everyone at the little, rough, native hospital had given up something for the work—home, or ambitions, or congenial companionship. The Little Nurse had given her girlhood. She was delicate to look at and almost as white as her clothes, and she carried a sense of fragrance and daintiness even amongst the sickening sights and smells that haunted the overcrowded wards. In the theater with Brother Lazarus, in the sterilizing-room with Brother Ignatius, she served in silence and integrity, the breath of her presence as subtle and divine as a wind-flower in the English spring. It was only at night, and to the desert, that she became human enough to be a girl, and not a ministering angel.

The Little Nurse's mind was as clean as her body or her spotless uniforms; it could not dwell on the probable dirt and debauchery of the House in the Sands, and so she swept it clean in fancy and made it a fairy palace where she took her relaxation. It was so delightful to walk under the behindis and the date palms along the dim, brown garden-ways, though in actual fact she had never walked there—she had only looked with wistful eyes through the bars of the great wooden gates that were never painted and that looked gaunt and forlorn, locked guardians of the House and its secrets. She never thought of it as it really was, with its dusty, empty rooms, and the shameless Arab beds crowded on the verandahs—beds of wooden frames and crossed twine, with a coarse sacking mattress and no further embellishment. But one Sunday night its revelry was forced upon her despite herself and very much against her will, since she needed sleep. She had heard the motor-cars rolling out along the road from Aden as early as eight o'clock, and from the beautiful garden which ought to have been full of moonlight and silence arose a hideous clamor that made even the Big Nurse shrug her shoulders and say it was a scandal.

"What can they want out here, at such a little, unknown place as Golgotha?" said the Little Nurse in wonder. "It has always puzzled me how that beautiful house came to be built in the desert near an Arab village."

"Probably for that very reason of its remoteness," said the Big Nurse dryly. "Golgotha is so far out, and so unattractive, that they thought there would be no one to overhear. And until we

came they must have had it very much their own way."

"I hope it won't go on very late," said the Little Nurse anxiously. "We do *need* our sleep!"

The Big Nurse was not troubled by the noise. She fell asleep, a little later than usual it is true, and slept through it, unaware that her colleague was wandering about her own room and out into the verandah, wondering when the discordant sounds across the road would cease. There was laughing and shouting and uncouth Arab words she could not disentangle, though she was learning Arabic, and the sound of singing and the beating of tambourines. At one o'clock the Little Nurse was growing desperate, when suddenly out of the clamor arose an unmistakably English voice and accent:

"By Jove! The moon's exactly like a bubble!" it said.

The Little Nurse glanced up instinctively, and saw that it was true. The moon was just like a great iridescent bubble, floating in the soft, light sky that was flooded with her light. She heard other voices then—German and French and Roumanian—and then that English voice again, speaking in Arabic this time and causing a fresh burst of senseless mirth. It was all very wicked and unseemly, and the presence of an Englishman made it worse. Nevertheless, being a spirited girl, she was more angry than frightened, for it seemed to her atrocious that she, who worked hard for God, should be kept awake by these men and women who were serving the Devil. She ran to her writing-table and, without pausing to think, wrote a little note:

"Will the gentlemen who can speak English bear in mind that they are preventing the nurses in the Bungalow getting any sleep? It is now one o'clock, and as we have to be up at five, we really want a few hours of rest. I am sure that under the circumstances they will try to be quiet and let us sleep."

She slipped into her dressing-gown and crept down the wooden stairs with her soft, bare feet to arouse the Somali boys sleeping below. One of these she entrusted with the note, telling him to take it to the garden across the road and give it to anyone who could read it. Then she went back to her verandah and waited.

For a few minutes the din went on as before; and then across the tambourines and the clink of glasses she heard a German say, "Ach Himmel! Was ist dat?" A silence fell, and then the English voice she had heard before, with a reckless excitement: "Stop that cursed row! I'll shoot anyone who speaks above a whisper!" Despite the rough language, that turned her a little sick, it was a wonderful voice, deep-chested and sweet and clear, and—perhaps in contrast to the guttural German's—singularly refined. The dead stillness that followed the Englishman's voice and some order that he gave in Arabic showed at least that he had authority, or possibly meant what he said. But a minute later she heard him add something about a last serenade, and then, to her surprise, the strings of some instrument she had not noticed in the general hubbub, and the same rich voice singing in a quietude as complete as if he were entirely alone. Perhaps his noisy companions had gone into the house or were awed into silence, but it seemed all at once as if the night were emptied of everything but the soul of the Little Nurse listening on the verandah and the voice that belonged to nobody singing from out the garden opposite:

"My heart is as hot as the desert sands,
For the love of thee.
O bring me the coolness of thy hands—
Those little hands!—
To comfort me.

"My heart is as scorching as desert skies
For the want of thee.
O lend me the shadow of thine eyes—
Those dewy eyes!—
To shelter me.

"My heart is athirst as the desert wind
To drink of thee.
O tell me not that my soul has sinned—
Too deeply sinned!—
But come to me!"

The Little Nurse's eyes were as deep and cool as pools of brown water, but this was a coincidence. It is difficult, anyway, to be very angry with something that has given you great pleasure, and the song coming out of the moonlit garden was a pure delight. But the Little Nurse crept into bed, trembling. It was an adventure, and adventures are dangerous things.

She could not help looking with an added curiosity and interest at the House in the sands the next day. The rest of her night had been undisturbed, and it showed no unusual signs of life when she and the Big Nurse went off to the Hospital in the early morning. The Hospital was some quarter of a mile away, nearer the Arab village, and out of sight of the House in the sands; but they returned to the Bungalow for luncheon, and after luncheon the Little Nurse went up to her own verandah and glanced covertly across the way. It was only the back door of the garden that opened out in this direction, but it was always full of interest to the Little Nurse, even before the events of last night. Sometimes an Arab would come out leading a camel, and would crouch in the sand and feed him outside the mud walls, the camel lying in the shade and chewing his food as slowly as a cow, with a wonderful air of always thinking of something else. There is nothing so mysterious as a camel, both from his habit of holding his head high above earthly concerns and never looking where he goes, and his way of eating when there is nothing to eat. Even his spreading tread is softly mysterious, and the Little Nurse loved to watch him bobbing across the desert, and to fancy that he came from those further wastes that her soul loved. Or sometimes a herd of goats would come up outside the garden walls and eat the lower branches of a broken mimosa which had fallen across them while the Arab driver gossiped furtively with a slovenly woman who stood just inside the garden door. There seemed to be a large staff of servants, and there was always someone coming or going. Today she noticed from the verandah that there were two camels kneeling in the dust outside the wall, and a tall man in Arab dress sitting beside them. He was not feeding them, and he sat so absolutely still that she could not account for the eerie feeling that he was watching her. Probably he was really asleep, for the heat of the day must have made his position under the wall hardly endurable, even though the wind blew hard across the desert. But she was conscious of being almost glad when the Big Nurse called her, and they went off to the Hospital again in a dusty, springless gharry, drawn by a trotting camel. The Arab was still sitting in the sun as they went by, and never turned his head. And yet she felt that he was watching her.

At six o'clock the work was over for the day, and the two wearied women came home for the evening meal and the night's rest, which the Little Nurse, at least, hoped would be a good one, to make up for the hours she had lost. As she went up to her room to have her bath and change from her hospital clothes, the Big Nurse called to her in passing:

"I think that man must be ill. I noticed him at luncheon-time sitting outside the wall by his camels, and he is in exactly the same attitude still. I've got my gown off—do you mind going over the road to see if it's all right?"

The Little Nurse experienced a strange feeling of faintness and a little prickle of the skin all over her body. She was horribly frightened without the least reason, and she felt as if she could not go out to the immovable Arab alone. She had not told the Big Nurse the whole of last night's adventure, though she did not herself know why. All she had said was that the noise had been so dreadful that she had sent Abdulla over with a note asking them to be quiet, if any of them could read English, and that then they had really been silent. The Big Nurse said it was disgraceful, and if it went on they must speak to the police, and there the subject had dropped. Now the Little Nurse braced her nerves and said, "Of course I will,

but I expect he is only asleep," and went down the wooden stairs and out of their own garden with her knees not quite steady beneath her.

The Arab was indeed sitting under the wall exactly as he had been hours ago, but then he might not have kept that attitude all the hours they were in the Hospital. He was a tall man, to judge from the length of his brown legs and partly reclining body, and he was dressed in the ordinary linen tunic and colored futer, hanging below his knees, that are common to his class. On his head he wore a twisted cloth that passed round his face and over his mouth and chin so that it was not easy to judge of his face. Many Arabs do this if a keen wind is blowing, but the evening air was so hot that it made the Little Nurse vaguely uneasy with her new sense of suspicion, lest it might be a disguise. His eyes were cast down, but she could not tell if he were asleep, and spoke to him in Arabic.

"Are you ill? You have sat here a long time. Can I do anything to aid you?"

Her voice was always soft and quick and gentle, but it suddenly died away in her throat as he raised his eyes. Dear Heaven! they were European eyes, as blue as the sea and full of a devlish laugh of recognition. With his eyes, the rest of his face seemed to reveal itself, and she knew that his dark skin was partly sunburn and partly some false stain, but not the stain of black blood. He was as white as she was.

The cry on her lips changed to sudden anger. "You are spying on me!" she said impulsively. "You are the Englishman who was in the garden last night. What are you doing here?"

"Come into the garden and see!" he whispered in that rich voice that she remembered. "Do come! It is a beautiful garden, and you will love it."

The Little Nurse suddenly turned her back on him and walked across the road again to her own garden and its safe mud walls.

"There is nothing the matter with the man," she called to the Big Nurse as she went up to her own room. "He was half asleep, that is all."

The golden oriole sang and builded amongst the golden blossoms unwatched by the Little Nurse for the space of three days, for she was afraid to go on the verandah save on that side of the Bungalow furthest from the House in the Sands. She was still conscious of being watched and waited for, and still undecided in her own mind as to what she ought to do. If she told Brother Lazarus or the Big Nurse that an Englishman who wore Arab dress, but had blue eyes that betrayed him, sat all day in the dust to spy upon her, they would look at her with cold, uncomprehending eyes, and the instant suspicion that it was by some fault of her own. The story of the night when she sent over a note requesting silence would assume a different aspect to them. The error would now be hers, and the subsequent serenade a natural consequence of her boldness. She felt the injustice of their attitude before it was realized, and hesitated to provoke it. But sometimes when the camel-gharry turned out of their own gate into the dusty road the Big Nurse would say, "There is that Arab with his camels again. How still he sits! I never saw an Arab so patient or so faithful to his post,"—and then the Little Nurse would tremble, though she never turned her head to look. He was patient indeed—hideously so, and faithful to some wicked task he had set himself. The sense of him entered even into her innocent sleep, and now there was a definite voice in the desert of her dreams singing to her in rich undertones.

"My heart is as scorching as desert skies
For the want of thee.
O lend me the shadow of thine eyes—
Those dewy eyes!—
To shelter me!"

There was no rioting now in the garden of the great House. Even on Sunday night the nurses slept undisturbed, and the week-end parties seemed to have ceased, for a time at least. But one night the Little Nurse started up from

sleep with her heart beating somewhere in her throat, and a fear upon her as of a nightmare. She must have dreamed it—but she thought she had heard a sound of loosened mud and sand as of some one climbing over the wall below her—the wall that shut the Bungalow safely in at night. She sat up in bed and listened, and there was only the rushing of the night wind across the desert that said "Come! come!—come with me out and beyond laws and duties, and find room for your soul and your girlhood." The date palms rustled in the darkness, and then just below the verandah where she slept a fragment of speech floated up to her as if it were hardly more than the night wind. It was so close to her that it was but a whisper in her ears—

"Taiâ la hun—Murâdî min janâ—bak shay." (Come here—I have a request to make to you.)

The Little Nurse rose and dressed hurriedly, with hot, trembling hands. She trod the wooden stair without caution, careless if she waked the Big Nurse or no, to announce the fearlessness of her coming, and never did the Angel with the flaming sword face Lucifer at the gates of Paradise as did the Little Nurse the tall, shadowy figure that lurked amongst the ithyl trees.

"Man ant? Li-ash jît?" (Who are you? Why are you come?) she asked fearlessly. "You must leave this garden at once, or I shall call the boys to turn you out."

"Qarrib!"—(come near!) "I came because you would not come to me," he said, holding out his long, slim hands to her, and she saw in the moonlight that though they were still dark with sunburn he had no longer stained them. "I am going out into the desert tomorrow—Ruba el Khali, the middle desert that no white man knows. All things are possible there—life and death and mystery and adventure."

She repeated stonily, "You must go out of this garden at once. *Ruh ila'l—bait halan!"* (Go home quickly.)

"How are you going to get me out of your garden?" he said laughing, and his eyes were always most reckless and devlish when he laughed.

The Little Nurse considered this problem for a moment, standing there at midnight, in the lonely moonlight, facing a dangerous foe.

"Are you a gentleman?" she asked simply.

"No," he answered at once. "I have lived as an Arab amongst Arabs for too long. It began in a love of adventure, of something strange and *bizarre,* out of the beaten track—it has led me down into a degradation where even such as you are not safe from me. I would tempt you now, if I could. And indeed your soul loves me, as a bird its mate." He took her hands hard in his and looked down deep into the cool depths of her eyes, which were like brown pools of water. But the Little Nurse stood as if turned to stone, unresisting but unconsenting, and as suddenly as he had taken her hands he released them, and with the obeisance which an Arab gives only to his Sultan he bent before her until his forehead touched the dust. *"Amrak!"* (I obey your order!) he said, and kissed her feet. Then he turned and went, up over the traitorous wall that could not keep him out, and the world was free of him to the Little Nurse.

She went back to her work and to her life, dreaming her dreams undisturbed upon the verandah, and watching the golden orioles build at her leisure, after the long, hot days in the Hospital. Somewhere out into the middle desert—Ruba el Khali—he must have gone with a caravan, so far that her thoughts could hardly follow him, and she did not look for him to come back. Now and then the dust storms came up and hid the far, faint lines of Aden's rocks, that could be seen at Golgotha in clear weather, and wiped out even the desert sands, round the Bungalow; and then it seemed that the life lived by the Order of St. Barnabas of Pity was indeed isolation, and had no right even to conjecture of a larger world beyond. She never thought of the strange Englishman who lived as an Arab—she was

quite sure she never thought of him, because she remembered to stop thinking.

He had been gone three weeks when the Big Nurse went into Aden one Sunday. The nurses took it in turns to go every now and then for evening service, but not often, because it was a long way, and there was service at the Hospital. It was the Big Nurse's turn, and because the camel would need a rest she could not be back until nine o'clock; but it was a clear, moonlight night and her homeward ride would be pleasant, even in the camel-gharry. Brother Lazarus went, too, leaving Brother Ignatius and the native helpers in charge of the Hospital; but it was not a busy day, and the Little Nurse returned to the empty Bungalow at five o'clock. She was instantly aware, as she entered her own loved verandah, of renewed sounds of life from the House in the Sands, and to her dismay she realized that the week-end parties had begun again after a long period of peace. She remembered now seeing the owner, Haroun Ali, driving through Golgotha—a young Arab with a full, coarse type of face, too fat for his years. She had seen no women arrive, but their presence was obvious from the sounds of mad revelry coming up from the garden already. The best she could hope was that as they had begun so early they would not keep it up as late as usual.

The sun went down at six, leaving a faint, cold rosiness like dawn's upon the desert. In the brief twilight that followed it the din in the garden opposite seemed the more incongruous for the peace and silence that rested throughout the Bungalow. But suddenly out of the noise and the fading light arose a sharper clamor and a shriek that made the Little Nurse spring to her feet with an answering cry. That was not revelry, or even drunken anger; it was a death cry, and it cut the evening in two and divided noise from silence and light from dark, bringing an instant hush after an increasing night. The Little Nurse hurried to that side of the verandah that overlooked the House, and saw the door in the wall closing softly. Outside in the dust lay a man, face downwards, on the very spot where the Englishman used to sit under the wall and watch her with his blue eyes.

She ran down the wooden stairs without knowing that she moved, and sent the Somali boys over to bring him in. Whether he were one of Haroun Ali's friends, or some foolish stranger—French of German—who had ventured too much in the intoxication of his youth, he was a desperately wounded man and must be succored. She had never thought of another possibility until they were carrying him in and she saw his face, and then with an impulse she could not explain she motioned them to the stairs, up into her own room, and to her own bed, upon which they laid him down to bleed his life away. He had been stabbed through the lung with an Arab "spear" or short knife such as camel drivers carry, and though she sent messengers to the Hospital at once for Brother Ignatius, she knew that it was too late.

The Englishman was still dressed as an Arab, but as she cut the linen away from his breast she noticed how white the skin was in contrast to his sunburnt neck. And his dress was richer—no longer the disguise of the camel driver that he had worn to watch her, but the dress of an Arab merchant or farmer class. After a few minutes he came back to consciousness, and looked round him wonderingly, from the dainty white bed on which he lay to the quiet, busy figure at his side, tending him. They only represented the decencies of life to European eyes; but he was still to all intents and purposes an Arab, and she had done right to bring him into her own room with its atmosphere of purity and cleanliness, for dumb things spoke to his darkened senses more than the most eloquent sermon. It was as if he looked straight into the past and the possibilities he had forsworn with this sense of fragrance and refinement about him again in exchange for the native squalor of the House in the Sands, whose gaunt rooms held nothing but some carved and broken furniture, and

whose verandahs were filled with the shameless string bedsteads and sacking mattresses of its purpose. There was neither coverlet nor drapery in the House in the Sands. He raised his hand from the cool white sheet of the Little Nurse's bed as if almost afraid to soil it with his touch.

"Can you speak to me?" said the Little Nurse in her low, quick voice, noticing the movement. "Is there anything you wish to say?"

"Too late, little one!" he said gently. "Such wastrels as I am are best got rid of in this way, and flung out into the dust. Why did you bring me in?"

"Hush!" said the girl, and her lips contracted painfully. "I should not leave even an Arab to die by the roadside."

"But you would not bring him here?" he said quickly, his eyes wandering round the room hungrily as if he would grow familiar with its lost civilization even in the short space left him. It was a room with many doors, all open to the verandah, through which a cool wind blew; there was a whiteness and freshness about its draperies that suggested the girl's innermost thoughts to him, since we think our refinements before they can take shape round us. There was something friendly and intimate in the little low chairs and the reading lamp and the many books. It might be just here by the bed that the Little Nurse knelt to say her prayers, and there by the table that she sat to read her home letters.

"No, I should not bring an Arab in here," she admitted with some hesitation, "but there is a room downstairs—"

"Why did you not put me there?" he persisted.

"You are an Englishman—"

"Not that," he pleaded, and his voice was very faint and tired. "Say something sweet to me before I die!"

She was helplessly silent, but his words were so obviously true that her heart ached for pity.

"Because I had thought about you so often," she said. "Because I have no right to judge, and — perhaps — you found beauty in the garden where I would not come?"

"Not beauty," he said, his face contracting a little. "But what might have been beauty—with you." His voice strengthened into some of its old richness. "Little one—little love of mine with the dear, dewy eyes!—I do not repent. If I had taken you by force into the garden, I would have made you happy, though you were so frightened of it." He turned his face to her breast and moaned as if in pain. "'My heart is athirst as the desert wind,'"—he said faintly, but when she would have laid him back upon the pillow he clung to her wilfully. And so, with his face resting on her heart as no other man's had rested, he presently died, unknown to her and with no more confession than that of his lawless love.

When Brother Ignatius reached the Bungalow the Little Nurse was drawing the sheet over the nameless face.

"I don't know who he was or who killed him," she said briefly. "There was a quarrel in the House in the Sands, and they stabbed him, and threw him outside. We can make inquiries, of course, but I think everyone has left by now, it has been so quiet for the last hour."

"*Requiescat in pace!*" said Brother Ignatius, making the sign of the cross. "His sin has reaped its own reward."

"But there was beauty in the garden," said the Little Nurse dreamily.



THE great difficulty about keeping the Ten Commandments is that no man can keep them and be a gentleman.

THE BLUE SPHERE

By Theodore Dreiser

SCENE—The kitchen of the Delavan home, one block from the tracks at the outskirts of Marydale. A solid board fence, unpainted, encloses the yard on three sides. In the front, a yellow picket fence with a gate caught by a string. From the gate to the front and rear doors, a moist, brick walk. Outside the kitchen window, vines and hollyhocks. Inside, a breakfast table on which dishes are spread, and at opposite sides of which sit MR. *and* MRS. DELAVAN.

TIME—*Seven-thirty.*

JOSEPH DELAVAN

(*A short, stout man with brown hair and moustache, and brown-blue eyes, a grocery man by trade—rising and brushing the crumbs from his lap.*)

Well, I'll be going. (*He takes down his coat and hat from a hook, and folds up his paper.*) See that the boy don't get out again today.

(*He glances toward the front room in an apprehensive, strained way, and goes out, leaving the door open, but carefully fastening the gate behind him.*)

MRS. DELAVAN

(*A blonde woman of thirty-three, clearing away the breakfast dishes and shaking her head dolefully.*)

Ah me! Oh, the day that he was born! It makes all the difference. Things have not been the same since he came—poor little thing that it is! And to think that I should have given birth to it! (*She brushes away the gathering tears with her hand.*) It would be a blessing almost—(*she pauses, terrified by her own thoughts*)—but God forgive me for thinkin' of it! It would be me that would suffer if any harm came to a single hair of its head. (*She wipes her eyes anew.*)

DELAVAN

(*Walking out Wood Street to his store, and sighing heavily.*)

Dear, dear, dear, dear! That this should have befallen *us!* (*He sighs again.*) Three years old! Not walking, not talking, and never will! The years! The years! (*He renews his sigh.*)

THE SHADOW

(*A soft, girlish figure, entering the Delavan kitchen, trailing clouds of diaphanous drapery, a pale blue sphere in her hands. She looks about, passes through the walls to the front bedroom, where Eddie,* THE MONSTROSITY, *lies, and bends over the crib.*)

Eddie! Eddie! (*She holds up the sphere.*)

THE FAST MAIL

(*Passing Ellsworth, one hundred and sixty miles away.*)

Oooooooo-ee! Ooo-ee! O-O!

MRS. DELAVAN

(*Laying dishes in the dishpan.*)

My, but the flowers smell sweet this morning. (*She pauses to examine the trumpet flowers.*)

THE MONSTROSITY

(*A child, with a head almost twice the size of a normal one, opens its large and unnaturally starey eyes, and for the first time perceives the blue sphere.*)

Urg-ubbla-da! Blub! Blub! (*It holds out its hands.*)

THE SHADOW

(*Smiling winsomely, and waving the sphere to and fro, and revealing the splendor of its clarity.*)

See how beautiful it is! How blue, how light!

(*It seems to float in her hands like a bubble as she turns it round and round, beckoning the child to follow.*)

THE MONSTROSITY

(*Its arms still aloft, kicking and crowing horribly.*)

Ahda-da! Urg! Ahbublu!

MRS. DELAVAN

(*Hearing the sound of its voice, and opening the door.*)

It's awake, is it? My little pet. (*She suppresses an almost uncontrollable shudder as she views it.*) I thought I heard you kicking and crowing. Poor little dear! My loving petty lamb! Come now! (*She lifts it up and fondles it on her breast and neck.*) Oh, the poor little sweetheart. Was it having to talk all to itself? Well, mother's been thinking of her pretty baby all the night long. (*To the lad of nine years who appears in the doorway*): Come, Harry. Get your clothes on. I'll want you to go to the store. (*She smoothes the great head on her breast with a feeling of anguish.*) Sweety baby! Mother's little lamb. (*She begins to dress it.*)

THE FAST MAIL

(*Passing Ultona, one hundred and fifty miles away.*)

Oooooo-ee! Oooooo-ee! O-O!

DELAVAN

(*Arriving at his store, still thinking.*)

It would be so much better if it should die—though I don't suppose I ought to wish it. It's unchristian. (*He unlocks the door and goes in.*)

THE SHADOW

(*Before the child and its mother, waving the blue ball.*)

See! How wonderful! How lovely! Here are yellow and grey and green as I turn it. See the pink here—isn't it lovely? This soft, soft shade of pink! (*She holds the ball close.*)

THE MONSTROSITY

(*Staring, interested, allured.*)

Ah-da! Eee! Oo-blub!

(*It holds out its hands and kicks and struggles. The shadow moves backward, then forward, then backward, then forward, luring the child by the motion.*)

MRS. DELAVAN

(*Carrying the child to the kitchen.*)

Come now, I'll put you down here where mother can see you. That's right. Now here's a nice wooden rattle for baby to play with until mother gets it something to eat. (*She places a red and green rattle in the child's lap. He drops it to gaze at the blue sphere.*) And now here is something for the baby to eat. (*She brings a bowl with a spoon, from which she feeds it, sighing the while. The shadow disappears.*)

MRS. MINTURN

(*Looking out of her window at some sweet pea vines and smiling.*)

What a perfect day! How nice Mrs. Arthur's trees look! I think—

THE SHADOW

(*At her elbow.*)

You think you will call on Mrs. Delavan, don't you? She is so lonely!

MRS. MINTURN

(*Seemingly continuing her own thoughts.*)

I will call on Mrs. Delavan; she is so lonely. I guess I'd better do my house work first, though.

MRS. DELAVAN

(*Ceasing to feed the child.*)

Now then, will it play with its rattle like a nicey baby, while mama does the

front room? (*She passes her hand over her forehead wearily, and turns to her work.*)

THE SHADOW

(*Reappearing to the child.*)
See how wonderful! How beautiful! It floats and flies as you will float and fly if you come with me. (*She dances the sphere before it.*)

THE MONSTROSITY

Ugh! Blooble!
(*It begins to propel itself across the floor toward the door, holding out its hands at times.*)

THE SHADOW

(*Waving the blue sphere.*)
Come! Come!

THE FAST MAIL

(*Passing Ungers, one hundred and twenty miles away.*)
Ooooo-ee! Ooooo-ee! O-O!

MRS. MINTURN

(*Finishing her housework at eleven.*)
Now I think I'll go. Mrs. Delavan's life with that child on her hands must be awful! (*She throws a light shawl about her shoulders and steps out.*)

THE SHADOW

(*Meeting her at the* DELAVAN *gate.*)
Forget the gate! Forget the gate!
(*Unconsciously* MRS. MINTURN *leaves the gate open.*)

MRS. DELAVAN

(*The spell of self-absorption broken by the sight of* MRS. MINTURN *passing the window.*)
Eddie! Eddie! Where *is* he? She hurries to the kitchen and out upon the walk, where she finds him.
(*To* MRS. MINTURN, *without greeting*): He always makes for the gate for some reason, and we're so afraid that if he gets out some time he'll get hurt. (*She picks him up and carries him back to the kitchen entrance with grieved thoughts.*) Now won't you play here, dearie? (*She puts him down.*)

MRS. MINTURN

(*A pale, slight woman with partially gray hair.*)
It is such a lovely morning I thought I would run over and see how you are getting along. (*To herself*): What an affliction! Horrible! What a dreadful thing it really is. (*She plunges into an exchange of friendly gossip.*)

THE SHADOW

(*Reappearing before the child, the blue sphere in her hands.*)
See! How perfect! Green and violet, and this fleck of milky white all toned into one! (*She waves the blue sphere.*)

THE FAST MAIL

(*Passing Berham's, eighty miles away.*)
Ooooo-ee! Oooooo-ee! O-O!

JOHN GALLOWAY

(*The engineer, stout and round, to* PETERSEN, *the fireman, slender and sinewy.*)
This makes the fifteenth year I've been on this run; fifteen years tomorrow. If somethin' don't happen then it'll be fifteen years without a real, serious, big accident. I guess I'd better tap on wood. (*He smites the small window ledge of his window. The engine takes a great trestle.*)

PETERSEN

(*Stopping in his shoveling.*)
This makes my fifth. (*The thunder of the wheels on the bridge drowns most of the sound, and the wind blows the rest away.*)

DELAVAN

(*Approaching the house at twelve-fifteen, a block distant.*)
Well, if the gate isn't open and Eddie on the sidewalk! Ella ought to keep a better lookout than that. (*He hurries forward.*) It's bad enough to have a child in this state, but to have it crawling all over the neighborhood. (*He stoops to pick it up.*)

THE SHADOW

(*The blue sphere in her hands.*)

Forget the gate! Forget the gate! (*Passing her hand before his eyes.*)

(*He enters the gate, leaving it open, but returns after a little to close it.*)

MRS. DELAVAN

(*Appearing at the door, distressed and ashamed.*)

Eddie! He has crawled out again! Why, he was right here only a moment ago. Where did you find him? (*She makes room for* MRS. MINTURN, *who comes forward to make her departure.*)

DELAVAN

(*With suppressed irritation.*)

Outside the gate. He was half way down the street here. The gate was wide open.

MRS. MINTURN

(*Apologetically, sorry for* MRS. DELAVAN.)

I may have left it open, though I thought I closed it. I must be going now. I'm sorry. I know how it is with children. They love to crawl. (*She greets* MR. DELAVAN.)

DELAVAN

(*To* MRS. DELAVAN, *after* MRS. MINTURN *had gone.*)

Something is sure to happen one of these days if you don't keep that gate closed. It's bad enough as it is, seems to me, without making a spectacle of us. I—

MRS. DELAVAN

(*Wiping her eyes.*)

There you go. As though I didn't have a hundred things to think of besides watching him. Heaven knows, I don't want him to get away any more than you do, but he seems possessed to do it. I didn't leave the gate open. Mrs. Minturn called a little while ago—

DELAVAN

(*Sympathetically.*)

I know you've got a lot to do. I'm just ashamed to have him crawling around that way. (*He pats her shoulder.*)

THE MAILMAN

(*Whistling and calling "*DELAVAN*!" hands in a letter.*)

THE SHADOW

(*As he goes out the gate.*)

Forget the gate! Forget the gate! (*He goes off, leaving it open.*)

THE FAST MAIL

(*Passing Ellwood, sixty miles away.*)

Ooooo-ee! Oooo-ee! O-O-O!

THE SHADOW

(*To the child, who is just inside the door.*) Grey! Green! Blue! Brown! See how smooth, how glistening, how round! (*She coaxes him with the sphere, waving it before her. The child begins to crawl.*)

DELAVAN

(*To his wife, who is putting food on the table.*)

Mrs. MacMichaels was in this morning. She wanted me to give her more credit. But with that husband of hers I couldn't. I told her if she would pay half the old bill—but she can't, of course. I don't see why I should be called upon to trust them. (*He eats rapidly.*)

MRS. DELAVAN

(*Forgetful of the* MONSTROSITY *for a moment.*)

Nor I. I know it's too bad, and I'm sorry for her, but I don't see that you should be called upon to do it. I wonder what's keeping Harry so long? (*She goes to the door.*)

THE SHADOW

(*Before the child outside, waving the sphere in sinuous lines.*)

Thus and so, right and left, round and round.

(*The child rocks its head in time with the motion.*)

DELAVAN

(*Chancing to glance at the child and*

deeming the motion to be the result of idiocy.)

Tct! Tct! Tct! It's too bad. (*He hides his distress behind a grave face.*)

MRS. DELAVAN

(*Returning from the door.*)

I don't see him. (*She seats herself. They eat in silence.*)

THE SHADOW

(*The child following her.*)

Round and round, round and round. Pale grey! Pale blue; Dark blue! Light! Light! Dark! Light! Dark! (*The child crawls eagerly after.*)

HARRY

(*Entering a few moments later with Eddie in his arms.*)

Somebody's left the gate open again. The kid was right near it. Say, if we don't keep it closed he'll get out some day and right down on the tracks. He was just scramblin' along.

MRS. DELAVAN

(*Wearily.*)

Now, who could have done that! It must have been the mailman. (*She puts the child beside her on the floor.*) I think I'll have to tie a string around him. He's getting awfully restless these days. I never saw anything like it. (*She contemplates the years of misery and discomfort and distress which he represents, but reproaches herself for it all at the same time.*) I don't know whatever I am to do with him. I can't lock him up in a room all day all by himself. (*She closes the door.*)

DELAVAN

That makes it pretty hot in here, doesn't it?

THE SHADOW

(*Hovering over the child.*) To hold this would be so wonderful—see round, blue, glistening! (*She waves it rhythmically. The child follows it with his eyes.*)

THE FAST MAIL

(*Passing Wheatlands, forty-five miles away.*)

Ooooo-ee! Ooooo-ee! O-O-O!

GALLOWAY

(*The engineer, wiping the dust out of the corners of his eyes and turning to* PETERSEN.)

Remember that cow we killed at Ellwood two years ago?

PETERSEN

(*Shoveling coal at his feet.*)

Yay-o.

GALLOWAY

(*Proudly.*)

They collected sixty dollars for that—so I understand. Utterson was telling me here a few days ago. (*He sticks his head out of a window and surveys the elbow of a stream that comes into view, then withdraws it.*) I never saw a cow tossed clean up in the air before. Her tail stood out as straight as a stick. (*He smiles and whistles for a crossing.*)

DELAVAN

(*Arising and shaking off the crumbs.*)

Well, I'd better be going now, I guess. (*He takes down his hat and coat.*) I don't see why he shouldn't play in the yard if we can keep the gate shut. (*He goes out.*)

HARRY

(*Fifteen minutes later, hanging around his mother's skirt.*)

Ma, I promised to pitch at a ball game at two o'clock. Can I go?

HIS MOTHER

(*Wearily, but sympathetically.*)

If you'll promise me faithfully to be back at five. You know what your father told you the other day. You ought to really stay here and help me mind the baby. (*He takes his cap and goes.*)

THE SHADOW

(*Moving before him to the gate.*)

Forget the gate! Forget the gate! (*He goes out, leaving the gate open.*)

THE FAST MAIL

(*Passing Hunterstown, thirty-five miles away.*)

Oooo-ee! Ooooo-ee! OO! OOO!

MRS. DELAVAN

(*Entering the front room for a moment.*)

And now I have that mending to do. And those pies. I think I'll do the mending first—no; I'll make the pies first. (*She returns to the kitchen.*)

THE SHADOW

(*Retreating before her.*)

I'll watch the child! Forget him! Forget him!

(MRS. DELAVAN *commences paring apples, all thought of the child escaping her.*)

THE SHADOW

(*Before the baby on the walk.*)

Come!

(THE MONSTROSITY *crawls eagerly after.*)

THE FAST MAIL

(*Passing Palmer's Station, fifteen miles away.*)

Ooooo-ee! Ooooo-ee! O! O! O!

GALLOWAY

Didjy see where Esposito got thirty days for that last shindig of his?

PETERSEN

(*Manifesting a proper interest.*)

No! You don't say! When did that happen?

GALLOWAY

(*Loftily.*)

Oh, last Monday. He come around the roundhouse, talking his usual guff, and they just took an' locked him up. It's thirty days for him now.

PETERSEN

(*Reverently and righteously.*)

An' it serves him good and right, I say.

GALLOWAY

That's what *I* say, too. These dago wipers! What good are they?

(*He blows for another crossing.*)

MRS. DELAVAN

(*Paring in her kitchen.*)

These apples are not as good as bellflowers for pies, but they'll do.

(*She casts cores and peelings away, mixes flour and rolls her dough.*)

THE SHADOW

(*Half way down the street to the track, the child following.*)

Such a pretty color. Blue! Blue as your mother's eyes! See how the light touches it here. See how clear it is. If you had this in your hands you would be happy, happy, happy!

(*The child crawls, his eyes fixed on it.*)

MRS. DELAVAN

(*Spreading the dough for the third pie.*)

This dough is really softer than it ought to be.

(*She sprinkles a little flour on it.*)

THE SHADOW

(*Holding a pink-flowered dress before her eyes.*)

Do you remember this?

MRS. DELAVAN

(*A vision of the church door at Clarendon, a small town thirty miles away, and of herself entering it in this very dress, and Nate Saulsby passing her and looking at her admiringly.*)

That was such a pretty dress. It had such nice frilled collars and cuffs. I wonder how Nate is doing now. He was a nice, handsome, clever boy.

(*Shadows of other girls and boys troop by—bits of crowds, country roads, country squares, a panorama of half-forgotten faces and places.*)

THE SHADOW

(*As* MRS. DELAVAN *dreams and the child crawls.*)

This ball is so perfect that if you had it you would be happy for ever and ever. It is perpetual joy, the color of peace. No need to seek for happiness else-

where. Follow this—but take it from my hands, you will be happy. See—

(*She waves it near, then far, then near, then far.*)

THE MONSTROSITY

Ooogh! Bubblum!

THE FAST MAIL

(*Passing Rutland, five miles away.*)

Ooooo-ee! Ooooo-ee! O—! O—! O—!

THE SHADOW

Just a little farther! Soon you will have it now. Soon I will give it to you. When we reach the corner, when we get there where the steel rails shine—I will give it to you. Isn't it perfect! Isn't it blue! See how the light falls through it—clear as water.

(*She trips gaily backward, waving the sphere before her from side to side.*)

THE FAST MAIL

(*Entering the environs of Marydale, a mile away.*)

Ooooo-ee! Oooooo-ee! O—O—O!

THE SHADOW

(*Hovering above the tracks a few* feet in front of the child.)

See, when you get here, right here, I will give it to you. The beautiful ball! The beautiful sphere! This you are to have when you get here—here! You will be so happy.

(*She coaxes, smiles and pleads.* THE MONSTROSITY *follows.*)

PETERSEN

(*To* GALLOWAY, *as they rush into Marydale, the bell ringing.*)

I see they haven't started on that siding yet here. They were to begin yesterday, so Jay Cox says.

GALLOWAY

(*On his seat by the window, a look of serene content on his face.*)

So I see. They couldn't get done at Linden, I suppose. (*He shifts his position for comfort and prepares to maintain silence as the train rounds a curve and the Wood Street crossing comes into view. Noting a wagon waiting at a minor crossing, he adds*): They ought to put a gate or two more in this town. They need them. (*He blows the whistle.*)

THE SHADOW

(*Hovering above* THE MONSTROSITY, *the blue sphere in her hand.*)

Just a little farther, baby. Only a little more, and then—

(*The child crawls out on the tracks as the engine rounds the curve, eight hundred feet away.*)

GALLOWAY

(*Stiffening.*)

By God! I believe that's a child on the track! Shake down the sand, will you? It is, as I live. Oh, Jesus!

(*He reverses the lever and throws on the air brakes.*)

PETERSEN

(*Leaping to the sand box.*)

Can't you stop her?

GALLOWAY

(*As the engine grinds and clanks, a frozen grip on the throttle.*)

No, by God! It's *too* late!!

(*The engine strikes.*)

THE SHADOW

(*Tossing the blue ball in the air.*)

There, my sweet, it is yours!

(*The ball falls into the child's hands.*)

MRS. DELAVAN

(*Hearing the whistle and shaking off her dreams.*)

The express! The baby! Good gracious! Where is the child? (*She runs to the door, the gate, the street.*) Eddie! Eddie! Where is he, anyway? (*She notes the train grinding to a stop at the corner and runs in that direction. A cold trembling seizes upon her.*)

GALLOWAY

(*Holding the air brake in a cutting grip, his face drawn and yellow.*)

I saw its face! I saw its face! I tell you! A beautiful child! I can never forgive myself for this. Just a little baby, too. Not more than two or three years old.

(*He drops down as the train stops and runs back—joined by the conductor, trainmen and passengers. A large crowd, gesticulating and exclaiming, gathers.*)

A Score of Passengers

How dreadful! How terrible! What a pity!

(*Several women faint.*)

Galloway

(*Explaining.*)

I didn't see it until it was right on. I have three little ones of my own.

Mrs. Delavan

(*Frantically making her way forward and falling on her knees.*)

My Eddie! My Eddie!

(*She screams hysterically and faints.*)

The Shadow

(*Appearing to the bereft mother as she weeps over the broken body.*)

It is here, it is here, don't you see!

(*The baby, holding the blue sphere, appears to the mother's eyes.*)

The Conductor

(*To a passenger, as the train moves slowly and then a little faster.*)

Well, it's a God's blessing if a child had to be killed it was a deformed one, anyway.

The Passenger

You're right there.

Galloway

(*A heavy, weary look on his face.*)

And I thought I was looking! The first child I ever killed in my fifteen years!

A LOVE SONG

By Folger McKinsey

COME on, come on, the world is up,
The mountains are awake;
I'll dare the death that any dare
For love of love's sweet sake!
This is no hill of Calvary,
Nor yet Golgotha's height;
For oh, my heart, the dream is there,
A vision and a light!

Step over, sweet, the bramble broom,
And skip the stones astrew;
The witchery of the moon is here,
The eldrich of the dew;
The roaring of the anvils dies,
And here no forges gleam,
Save that one silver flame where love
Beats out the golden dream!

FERD

By Harold Titus

NO one had ever called him Ferdinand, and the mere sound of his name coming from another's lips would have filled his colorless life with a golden radiance. That name was the one thing in his possession that could have given him true delight, but the joy of being addressed in its full glory was never realized. Perhaps if his other name had been Bismarck or Moltke or something that really harmonized with Ferdinand, mankind might have been more considerate. But there was no phonetic relationship between Ferdinand and Smithers; people did not think of the first as associated with the second, and the man was endowed with none of those qualities which might put him in a position where he could dictate the manner in which the world at large should address him.

His wife called him Ferd, in a heavy, sodden voice. His boss called him Smith, due to forgetfulness. Few others called him anything except an occasional name and Hi, There!

The manner in which the world treated his name was representative of the way it used the man. He never had any attention, never any fun, never anything different. Eight months of the year he worked in a basket factory, sorting sour-smelling strips of thin wood veneer. During the other four months, when the factory was shut down, he harvested ice or shoveled snow, or did whatever else there was to be done. When not laboring he stood his wife's nagging.

That was another thing: his wife. Ferdinand did not want to marry her. It was foolish, in the first place, for him to pay her any attention, for once within the pale of her influence there was no way out. She forced him to stand up before the justice and say those words which bound him to her for ever and ever and ever. Then she sent him off to work and began studiously to ignore his presence—except when things went wrong. Ferdinand was resentful of this for a time, but it went on with such unabated, convincing vigor that he came to believe the fault was with himself; that to win a kind word or a smile from the woman he feared was worth long years of painful suffering. So he suffered.

Whenever a man at the factory had a new "gag," he always sprung it on Ferdinand, who, his soul crying for human companionship, for contact with the lives of the people about him, was only too eager to ask the question that made an opening for the quick retort and its subsequent roar of laughter.

"Oh, *ain't* you th' boob, though!" they would scream, and beat him on the back in their high mirth.

Then, for days afterward, they would refer to the insult every time they saw Ferdinand and laugh.

At times this went even too far for the submissive spirit of Ferdinand, and he would then turn for an instant at bay. A hot flush, a burst of protest that invariably died on his lips to a weak, whining word or two was its extent. He never could summon anger enough to clench a hand, let alone striking a blow. Roots of blows were not in his heart. He wanted kindness—someone to talk with on equal grounds—sympathy and understanding.

Once Ferdinand ran a nail into his

foot and limped homeward with a joyous hope in his breast. *Now* she would be sorry for him! And kind to him! But she met him at the kitchen door, squeezing soapsuds from her red hands, bedraggled wrapper hanging limply from her pudgy figure, and these hot words:

"If it's bleedin' don't bring it in this here kitchen! You take yer sock off an' wash it out there. Then cut yerself a piece o' pork an' put on it. Don't go wastin' th' meat, neither!"

Meekly he obeyed, and limped back to work the next morning.

The children who played in the street threw things at Ferdinand as he sat under the poplar tree that grew before the house which his wife rented. Their fathers and mothers thought it funny. Once a stone struck Ferdinand on the shin and hurt him badly. Whereupon Mrs. Smithers hurried out of the house, grabbed the offending youngster and slapped his face smartly.

"Go home to your ma!" she snapped. "Don't throw things at this house! Don't you know yer liable to break a winda?"

So it had always been: no kindly attention, no sympathy. Why, even the corner grocer waited on Ferdinand as though it were a bore. With all others he seemed to be the quintessence of joviality.

So the man commenced to grow desperate. His heart-hunger for a kind word, a real human touch, became a growing pain. He thought of how nice it would be if he should die. Then they all would—

He was sorting the sour-smelling wood when that thought swept over him and he stood as though suddenly turned to hard, brittle stone.

"Wake up!" the boss said, many minutes later, and Ferdinand went back to work mechanically, for he was not conscious of the reprimand.

Swiftly the plan took shape in his mind. In unerring detail he worked it out, gloating over the possibilities. Oh, they would be sorry *then!* It would be in the paper, too. They would all talk and say, "Don't you remember how he used to . . ." and go on with their reminiscences as though he, Ferdinand, were a figure of high importance and close to all their hearts. They would call him *Ferdinand,* too. Death always brought respect and admiration. He knew that, because for years he had been listening to others talk about others.

Ah, that revenge was to be sweet! But— He stopped work again. His speculation as to future happenings had gone beyond one pertinent stage. What then? It worried him for a moment, but he passed it by. The big fact was there. Why worry about details and aftermaths?

Ferdinand sat on his wife's back steps waiting for darkness to come that summer evening, athrob with his plan. Behind him, the busy, superior woman moved heavily about in the greasy, smelly kitchen, washing black pots and sticky dishes. Kids of the neighborhood played in the street. Loud laughter came from the front rooms of the house next door. Thicker darkness settled, the street lights pricked out and a shrill-voiced woman screamed to her youngest to wash his feet before going to bed.

The man arose, almost guiltily, and sneaked softly out into the alley. He followed it across two streets and then turned into a thoroughfare that led him among scattering houses, toward the edge of the town. Although the night was hot, he carried his coat—a rare procedure. However, it was with a purpose. His plan should lack no detail!

Glancing frequently over his shoulder, Ferdinand made his way steadily toward the little lake that settled down among the hills. His circuitous approach was completed with all due stealth, and he was certain, absolutely, that he was alone!

He stood on the bank of the lake, close to the water's edge, and gloated. Oh, he would make them sorry! According to tradition the lake was bot-

tomless. Surely it was weed-filled and cut by the steady current of a small river. Just the place! Hard to find bodies!

Folding the coat carefully, Ferdinand drew from his pants pocket a bit of paper. He tried to read it again, but the darkness made the scrawl indistinguishable. He knew the words by heart, though; he had planned each with greatest thought. It went:

"I am gone but not forgot.
"FERDINAND SMITHERS."

He tucked this note of farewell into one of the coat pockets, and as he did so real moisture gathered in his eyes. He brushed it away with the back of a hand. Then, quickly removing his shoes, he put them on the ground, the coat beside them.

It looked right. It had been done that way before. When morning came they would be found, surely. With a final pat, a last look around, Ferdinand stole off in his stockinged feet, dodging among the infrequent houses on the outskirts of town and making off across lots toward the hillside country.

A difficult day was the next for Ferdinand. His curiosity was so great that he could scarcely remain in the corner of the old orchard which, with its neglected trees and tall timothy, made an excellent hiding place. From there he could look down upon the town and the lake. He saw an unusually large number of boats on the water. He knew! They were dragging for *his body!* The thought thrilled him—made him creepy and cold, too.

Then Ferdinand pictured his red-eyed wife, condoled by neighbor women, fed by sympathetic hands. A swelling came into his throat at that and a great tenderness went out toward the woman from his overflowing heart. *Was* it his wife though? The doubt brought him up-standing, mentally. It seemed, on closer analysis, that he was sorrowing for *himself!* Perhaps, though, this time of trouble had brought him and his wife closer together—so close that he could not tell which of them was the object of his pity.

Ferdinand did not think of eating until after the factory whistle blew at noon. Then he was conscious of a horrible emptiness. He climbed into an apple tree and ate some of the fruit. It was far from ripe, and his gnawing stomach did not relish the hard, puckery stuff. Therefore, followed an hour of utter agony. It was this exquisite pain that put Ferdinand on the verge of giving up the ghost. He *wanted* to go home, but did not *dare*. The stomach-ache was terrific, but he was afraid—afraid that his wife had not been sufficiently impressed with her loss.

Sleep came after the pain fully subsided, and when the man again opened his eyes he was damp and stiff, lying in the orchard, with the light just coming in the low east. He was terribly hungry.

Corn had been planted once among the trees, and as Ferdinand started out to forage, the stiff stubble poked through the bottoms of his socks and hurt his feet. He walked carefully along, his foolish mind persisting in thoughts of bread and butter and boiled potatoes. None of that, though. Ferdinand found only a garden. Pulling some carrots and radishes, he went back to his orchard corner and munched on them like a rabbit. After this he felt better—much better. A sense of great self-satisfaction descended upon him. As the day grew older he saw boats on the lake again. Looking for his body!

Ferdinand wondered if his wife stood down on the lake shore. He could not see people on the bank, but he knew that it must be well populated by those who were boasting of his friendship—those who were being *shown!* He was showing 'em! Then he thought of his wife again. She would have to have a black dress, which she would like, probably. She always complained about her clothing on the grounds that, in earlier and happier years, she once had owned and worn a blue silk. But, then, maybe she had ceased to care for such things,

now that she was in sorrow. The lump came back in Ferdinand's throat and he blinked rapidly.

At night he sought a resting-place in a straw-stack and slept fitfully. Whenever he awakened a queer depression seemed to be on him. At first he thought it was due to the food he had eaten; also, that which he had *not* eaten. But a lingering suspicion that, without his own knowledge and consent, he was worrying about the future stuck in his brain. When it was daylight he walked about a little, but the sticks and stones and stubble hurt his tender feet so badly that he was forced to draw his breath quickly through his teeth. So he sat down again and watched.

Fewer boats were on the lake that day. He had seen more than that number there just for fishing. The wonder that they had ceased to search so diligently for his body bothered Ferdinand.

So this day passed and night came. Slowly, with great physical pain, cautious in every move, Ferdinand started away from the orchard. His empty stomach bothered him greatly and tried to draw off part of the enthusiasm over his scheme that had warmed him for days. It made him suspicious of his own success. What if his wife should condemn him! What if she should rail with sneering words instead of venting in tender voice her relief at his safe return!

With such thoughts ramming about his brain, Ferdinand sat down. It rested his feet and he could think better. With the added physical comfort, optimism again flourished, and he went on.

Into town by the back alleys he finally went, sneaking, hiding from occasional passers-by, a guilty, ashamed feeling commencing to mingle freely with his sense of accomplishment. It was difficult getting across some of the streets without being recognized, but Ferdinand had a goodly store of patience, the only pre-requisite to success. Once he lay down in the shadow of a building and heard two men talking. He hoped they were talking about him, but strained ears caught only words pertaining to a foreign matter.

Gradually he worked his way into the alley that bisected the block in which he lived. He crept along, close to the fences, muttering under his breath as his sore feet were further bruised. He steadied himself with one hand against the rough boarding. From the back doors of houses streamed yellow light, and he could see women moving about in the kitchens.

There it was! There was his wife's own back door! The lamp sat on the kitchen table as it always did. He could see the wash-tub hanging by one handle from the back of the house. The wood-pile looked natural. He knew that the frying-pan, bottom covered with cooling grease, covered the cracked lid on the stove.

A figure came between him and the lamp. It was she! She was her old, shapeless self, dressed in the usual wrapper! When she moved aside, he saw that the wrapper was pink! Oh, well, he thought, maybe she was saving the black dress. He could excuse anything in the face of his rising anticipation.

Voices floated to Ferdinand. His wife was talking, but he could not distinguish the words. He stole through a gap in the sagging fence and sneaked into the back yard, avoiding carefully the streaming streak of light. The move brought another woman into view. She was a neighbor's wife, sitting in greasy corpulency, with stringy hair, arms folded, listening to the lady of the house talk.

Ferdinand's heart beat wildly. It was the test! Expectation rampaged! It was the kind of expectation that comes to men once or twice in a lifetime. Now he would hear her own words, mellowed by the Great Tragedy! Those warm, ringing, soul-filling sentences that had never come to him were to be *his!* Perhaps, she would—perhaps she would—*sob!* He nearly did at the thought.

With hurried step, half crouching,

he gained the house, leaned against it and stuck his head around the corner.

"Insurance!" he heard his wife cry, a fine, dry, rasping scorn in her petulant, irritated voice. "*Insurance!* Think that worthless piece 'uld leave insurance fer me? Not much! He wasn't that sort! Anyhow, who'd pay it, knowin' him? How do *I* know he's dead? How does anybody? Nobody *does!* He ain't! He never had th' nerve! He's sneaked off an' th' town's well rid o' him!"

Ferdinand straightened and swallowed hard. The high, ephemeral enthusiasm that had been his was replaced —replaced by a vast vacuity.

"It ain't no use," he muttered lowly.

Then he walked into the light and ascended the steps, cringing humbly when his wife's searching stare swung to him.

IRON

By Odell Shepard

DRAGGED from its sleep in the hearts of the hills
By cruelly mighty and masterful wills,
Bent in the torture of fierce red fire
To the manifold fashions of human desire,
Deep in its soul it will never forget,
But every pang we shall pay for yet.

Keen is the joy of the bickering swords
As they leap to the throats of their tyrannous lords;
Great is the glee of the battering hail
Beating its way through the plates of mail;
Loud is the laughter of vengeance that runs
In the thunderous roll of ten thousand guns.

DISCRETION: to pass the lie by telephone.

NEVERTHELESS, no matter how happily a woman is married, she always hopes that her daughter will grab a much better one.

A PROMISING ACTRESS

By Albert Payson Terhune

SPRING was in the brain. Soon it would be in the air. I found myself picturing my loved Pompton mountains all radiant in a shimmering, misty, green and pink veil; hearing in imagination the beat of the male swans' wings against the water as they battled all over the lake; smelling the million blended scents of the young wet forest; dreaming of shad and of bock.

The outward and visible signs of spring here in New York thus far were rain-rotted parks, tree boughs that were limp instead of frozen, and drab, shiny streets that bred sore throat. I discovered the laryngeal symptom when I subconsciously tried to hum the Schubert "Frühlingsglaube" — half a tone flat. Yet spring was coming. It was somewhere on the road. I felt it; as on sea I have felt land when no land was in sight. And I said so to Raegan.

It did not seem to awaken any special throb of emotion in him. In fact, he went on smoking the worst cigar I ever had smelled and making checkmarks here and there on a racing chart that was stretched athwart the table in front of him. Spring was whispering its own characteristic message to Raegan, with the prospect of track openings; and he had neither time nor words to waste on a mere layman's rhapsodies.

Not until I began again to hum dismally, "*Die Welt wird schöner mit jedem Tag*," did he speak. And then to exhort me right earnestly to desist. He had ever a nice ear for music.

"Yes," he added crossly, folding and pouching his chart, "spring's coming. Of course it is. Why wouldn't it? There's nothing else for it to do—the old faker! Since P. T. Barnum started in the general direction of heaven, there's never been such another four-flusher and public humbuggist as that same Gentle Spring. Always press-agenting itself and inciting otherwise sane folks to poetical fits and off-key singing. Spring promises more than all four seasons could make good on. And it makes good on less than any one of 'em. That's why it scores such a hit.

"It isn't what you do, but what you make people think you're *going* to do, that counts. Was there ever a circus that halfway lived up to its posters? And circuses are the most popular things on earth. The Garden of Eden would have looked like an ash dump alongside a commuter's front walk border, if flowers were a millionth as beautiful as their pictures in the seed catalogues. Yet more folks buy flower seeds every year.

"And spring is the champion promiser of the outfit. It promises us everything; except colds and malaria and ptomaine poisoning. And those three are the only things it's dead sure to bring.

"Gee! I was stuck on a girl once. No, I wasn't, either. I was in love with her. And she didn't do a thing but die. A long time ago it was. And she said to me, just before: 'Come out to my grave in the spring. It'll be all soft green and there'll be violets growing on it and the birds will be singing. It'll be sweeter for you to remember me that way.' So I waited till spring and I went there. It was raining like hell. And her grave, and all around it, was a muck of yellow clay with not a spear of grass within six feet; and a yellow puddle with a toad in it where the headstone ought to have been. I got my feet

soaked, and some measly commuter pinched my silver umbrella on the train coming back. Spring? Gee!"

I had him started. And I was sorry. For I did not want sordid truth to blur the *frühlingsglaube* and my visions of the misty green and pink on the Pompton mountains and the fire-blue lake and all. But Raegan is ever as easy to start as Trouble and as hard to stop as a Professional Southerner. I had all unknowingly laid bare one of his myriad philosophy veins, and there was nothing to do but sit tight until it should be worked empty.

"Promise everything. Even if you don't mean to make good on nothing," he was declaring. "That's the recipe. It holds, all the way down the animal kingdom from ad writers to human beings; and up again to spring. And somewhere along the line are—women. Like Iris Thayne, f'r instance."

So it was to be philosophy, plus story. As usual. I bade mental adieu to the *frühlingsglaube's* spell.

Iris (began Raegan) was the kind of girl who can be anything she wants to; without looking like anything but a fresh-faced high school kid, as innocent as a kitten that's never seen a back fence or an alleyway. Some girls are like that.

Just as some folks can't turn a tune, because there's a link missing between their ears and their vocal chords, so some others have a missing link between their consciences—or stomachs—and their faces. Iris Thayne was one of those.

She hit New York at eighteen from one of the bush league hamlets; having been brought here by an enjoyment agency. With her full consent and her parents'. It was a dull time; during a closed lid administration; and she got a job in a roof show that advertised:

"Fifty Girls! Fifty! All Single and All Under Eighteen! We Guarantee This!"

Papers that bar out "personals" and lottery notices and near-gold mine circulars all printed that ad. Printed it without a gulp. Comstock passed it by without a single crinkle of his facial wind-wooers; and tried to kill sweet little "September Morn." Yet that same ad was yelling aloud, in Broadway wireless:

"Swine at large, we give you our guarantee that here are fifty little girls; not one of them with a legal protector to thrash you; not one of them old enough to take care of herself or understand the rottenness of the game. It's dead easy. Come along. Don't be worried; our guarantee protects you. Elderly men with money first served."

A pretty thing, wasn't it, to pop out at you out of the pages of your family paper and howl at you in three colors from the twenty-four sheets on fences. One of the cleverest advertisements I ever saw. I sure admire the man who thought it up. He's due for a swell bonus when he dies, if Old Man Satan has a spark of gratitude.

That's the show Iris Thayne joined. She couldn't sing a note. And her feet had a way of getting over-plentiful when she tried to dance. And as for acting—there was no need in coaching her. She was rank enough without it.

But she was young and kind of pretty, and she looked as if she'd just that morning sidestepped the farm to get out of having to dig up tomatoes or weed the prune vines. And she and the other forty-nine kids looked like Commencement Day, as they posed in a half-circle behind the fat prima donna or the white flannel naval lieutenant and burbled the chorus of "I'm Longing for You."

Why, the men out front just tore up the seats. (There wasn't a dry mouth in the house.) Iris's fortune wasn't made. But the show's was.

I've read a lot of stories by Broadway experts, telling how a pretty showgirl or stage squab is deluged in vintage wines and fed up on five-dollar dishes that I could no more pronounce than I could pay for 'em. Being only a guy who's spent all my life in the neighborhood, I haven't had the good fortune to see such girls offered champagne once to ten offers of beer. And a broiled lobster (or maybe just a rabbit from far-off

Wales) is frequenter fodder for those I've seen than any dish with a figure in front of its decimal.

Anyhow, that was Iris Thayne's after-show provender; and she met up with three rah-rah boys to every live one. So she didn't get her limousine that year, nor yet her rope of pearls or even a sunburst. She closed the season with a lot of dark purple experience and not much else.

In the winter she got a thirty-dollar job in an off-Longacre cabaret. All she had to do was to walk back and forward in the square torture space in the center of the room, with her hands behind her, and in a virginy muslin dress; four times an evening; and inflict horrible punishment on four helpless, if justly unpopular, songs.

Between songs she was supposed to sit at some table or other if she was beckoned to; and let a baldheaded amateur rounder who had grandchildren buy her a drink and tell her stories I wouldn't tell in a barroom.

Or else she'd dance with some slick-haired near-man, hired by the restaurant to start the trot going when the merry guests were too shy to begin it themselves. (Few of those spontaneous gay dances at cabarets are self-starters. Most of them have to be cranked up by the management.)

The cabaret was anti-roughhouse. A place no refined person need blush for—unless he happened to be there. Once in a while some roystering blade at one of the tables would commence to sing or commit some other breach of cabaretiquette. But he was always squelched right off. Unless, of course, he happened to belong to a wine party. Wine parties being sacrosanct.

It was an easy life for Iris. Four songs, five or six dances and a few bald-headed chats, per evening. And thirty a week and her slice of the tips. But, at that, she couldn't save; or do much more than cover expenses. In New York it's a whole lot easier for a girl to live on ten dollars a week than on thirty; except maybe if she has a tired husband to save up for.

Iris hadn't any husband. To speak of. Neither the Honest Young Foreman nor the Rich But Kindly Merchant had happened to ask her to marry. Nor, strangely enough, had the Big-hearted Ranchman who blew into the cabaret with a bunch of steers he'd brought to New York to sell. It isn't that kind of a story. Largely, because it's true.

Iris met all those types and a hundred more. But they neglected to live up to Laura Jean or even to O. Henry. And she wasn't much the richer for their temporary comradeship.

Forty per, in a road company, looked good to her. But it looked a lot better when she saw it from the east of the Grand Central than from the west of it. And after three months of rube towns, where the acme of gilded vice was a two-dollar supper at the Eagle Hotel, she got back to New York. She brought with her a wad aggregating twenty-one dollars (five of it phoney); three Elk pins; a Mystic Shriner emblem; a triple gold plate manicure set from Omaha; a bunch of non-negotiable mash notes and acute indigestion.

A round of the summer amusement parks, on a vaudeville circuit, with the "Under-eighteen Sextette," was followed up by some more cabaret work, a half-season in the second row at a smoking-allowed burlesque house; and then a resting spell "at liberty," which was neither free nor restful. And so on for three years or so.

By the time she was twenty-two, Iris Thayne rang the bell on herself and sat down in front of the glass to take account of stock. She'd slipped a cog somewhere. And she meant to find out where. The mirror told her that somehow or other those four years of bucking against the Big Game hadn't changed her face one atom. She still looked just as young and fresh and innocent and unsuspecting as on the day the bank president back home had given her two hundred dollars to leave town forever. Work and wear-and-tear hadn't made a dent in her. Which was a miracle, if you like; but a miracle that's happened before now. (Maybe you remember Lillian Russell at thirty?)

Outwardly, Iris was as good as new. But where had she got to? Nowhere, says you, with a patient smile. She'd spent four years on the stage—and off. And in spite of total absence of any sort of talent, she hadn't advanced beyond chorus girl, "extra" and third-rate cabaretist. She had never got more than a living wage at any trade she had tried. And, believe me, she'd tried several.

Nor she wasn't likely to, either. Something was all wrong. Iris wasn't the type that belongs in the street or that isn't happy anywhere else. And she wasn't glorious enough to get into Easy Street by way of the stage door or through any of the less disguised walks of her profession. Just the same, she was out for money. Not for a bare living, but money in big lumps and a savings bank book and a few bonds and real clothes and a car; and a handful of jewelry that didn't have the pawnshop's scratch anywhere on it. She had seen a hundred women decked out gorgeous and with the light of a great peace in their eyes that only a bank account can give. Women who were no prettier than she was. Women whose escorts were very plainly not their parson-made rich husbands.

What was the answer? Iris puzzled all day over it. That night at the cabaret she watched.

By and by, she saw a girl she knew, sitting at a table with a man. The man ordered beer. The girl, by way of a subtle witticism, joggled his elbow as he was drinking. Pretty near half a teaspoonful of the beer lit on his sleeve. The man swore, fluent and lurid, at the poor girl. Then he got up and stamped out, leaving her there all weepy. If he hadn't been a perfect gentleman, most likely he'd have hit her. Iris went over to sympathize.

"After all I've done for him, too," sobs the girl. "I've stuck to him through thick and thin for two years, and now—"

She didn't get any further. Because just then at the next table a woman, in clothes as wonderful as they were infrequent, lifts up one jewel-illustrated hand and coquettishly pours a glass of champagne over the curly black head of the fat man who's sitting opposite her.

It created quite a bit of diversion. And, if it hadn't been champagne—from their third bottle, at that—it's likely the bouncer would 'a' got busy.

But what does the oily-haired escort do? Does he hand her one, or does he bite out chunks of red language? Not him. He just shakes the stinging wine out of his eyes and sops up his tombstone shirtfront and chuckles:

"You clever little darling! How'd you ever happen to think of doing that?"

"Can you beat it?" sniffles the poor girl that Iris is talking to. "Not a peep from him! I sh'd think he'd shake her for good after that. She's always doing such stunts to him and a lot of other guys. I know her well. We was in the chorus together once. Men go daffy over her. I can't see why. For she holds every one of 'em at arm's length. They're lucky if they can get near enough to her to slip a diamond on her finger."

Iris didn't wait to hear any more. Her puzzle was solved. Not being a born fool, she had the Answer. Next day she hocked some things she'd borrowed, and bought a ticket for Chicago.

It was three days later that a big-eyed little country girl, who'd just left the farm because all the boys pestered her so to marry them, blew into a booking office on Dearborn Street. The agent happened to be in a good humor. By the time Iris had talked to him ten minutes, he was in a still better humor. He was past middle age, and he began to throw a fatherly tenderness into his conversation. Iris was scared and got confused and looked as if she wanted to cry.

The agent apologized and proved he'd meant no harm. And to comfort the poor trembling child he took her out to lunch. She shuddered and made a pretty face at her first sip of a cocktail; and sneezed real cute when she tried to swallow a little champagne. And as the agent waxed ardent she grew coy.

But her eyes showed he was making a hit.

He had the job of supplying twenty girls, just then, to fill out the chorus of a new musical comedy company. He cut off the name of one of the twenty—he was tired of her anyhow—and substituted Iris Thayne.

The stage director said Iris was a crackerjack (for a beginner who'd had absolutely no stage experience), and he put her in the front row, for the next rehearsal. Also he had a talk with her, and she cried very softly when he tried to kiss her. And the stage director told the composer that there was one girl at least in that frowzy crowd who was as sweet as a wood flower.

Of course the composer was curious. Especially when he caught Iris staring at him with wide, fascinated eyes; as if she was looking at Agamemnon or John L. Sullivan. He spoke patronizingly to her after rehearsal. And she blushed. And the composer asked her to supper. And when she found it was served in a private room, Iris slapped his face and ran home alone, crying.

Next morning the composer sent her a humble note. And with it was the neatest little diamond-and-aquamarine lavallière. Iris forgave him. He spoke to the stage director and the librettist and the manager about her. He worked all the influence he had and got her into the octette of showgirls at ten dollars a week raise.

The manager wondered why the composer was so interested; and he undertook to find out. In the course of finding out, the manager, very insidious-like, spoke to Iris as no man had ever dared speak before. And she boxed his ears and stamped her little foot and vowed she'd tell the composer and the stage director and all the company and—

Say, she looked mighty pretty and dazzling in her virtuous wrath. Like an outraged dryad of the forest—a virgin forest, at that.

The manager soothed her down by explaining he hadn't meant any harm; and he persuaded her to stay on in the show, and he gave her a pearl ring with diamonds around it (he told her it symbolized innocence and tears), and he laid siege in regular strategic style.

By that time the backer of the show—a Michigan Avenue man, with all the money in sight—began to notice the manager's respectful attentions to Iris. He had a lot of simple faith in the manager's judgment. So he tried to cut in. His first move was blocked so hard that the spirit of competition blazed up. He bought Iris the dandiest little electric runabout that a girl could possibly care to sell.

The manager countered with a diamond bracelet; and the backer reparteed with a pearl necklace. By that time the composer was way out beyond his depth and swallowing the waves at every stroke. But Iris was sweet and gentle to him, and didn't scorn such dainty gifts as he could afford.

An added starter butted in; in the shape of the backer's chum; a heavyweight on the Board of Trade. And then Iris had to buy a cotton umbrella to keep the jewel shower from soaking her to the skin.

She wasn't just a showgirl any more. The manager and the composer had prevailed on the librettist to write in a "bit" for her. Her salary went up with a gleesome bounce.

Son, for the next three months the life of our simple little rural heroine was one of champagne fringed with diamonds. She had nearly a dozen men vying with one another to win out. She treated them alternately like big brothers and like small dogs. And the best part of it all was that not a soul could say one word against her character. The loudest boaster of the bunch couldn't prove he'd received from her any warmer favor than a pat on the head or a playful glass of wine in the same locality.

Now it wasn't that Iris was a sure-fire winner or that she was any more attractive than several other girls in the company. But she was surrounded by a high stone wall that had only a very few—and very tantalizing—peep-holes in it. There's a couple of old proverb wheezes that just fit Iris Thayne's case and explain her Chicago triumph. One is: "The Ungettable is

the Thing I Must Get." And the other runs: "Competition is the Life of Trade." After a while, a half-score men felt sure that victory with Iris would stamp them forever as heart smashers.

To Iris, all this time, virtue was not only its own reward, but was paying boom town dividends. Like spring, she promised everything. If not in so many words, at least in a million other ways. And, like spring, there was always a frost, just when a thaw was due.

She was seen everywhere. Her pictures were printed right and left. The show's backer was having a new musical crime written for her to star in. The rest of the company had stopped knocking her and had taken to calling her "*Miss* Thayne." If you know the comic opera game you'll understand what that meant.

Then came the lovely Laura Jean climax. Young Bernie La Salle, who had started out with strictly dishonorable intentions, lost his head in the flurry of the race and asked her to marry him.

She had the sense, first time he proposed, to refuse. That brought him mewing to her feet. He was the twelfth richest man in Chicago; one of the *very* richest of the younger crowd; and he had the name for knowing the world upside down. But what won't a chap do when other folks want what he wants, and when there seems no way—not even a decent way—of winning?

If Iris had accepted him at the jump, he'd likely have found his senses and crawled out of the affair. But when she refused him he kissed his intelligence good-bye.

At his fourth proposal she accepted him. She shied so when he asked her to set the marriage date, that he got real masterful and cave-manly and swore he'd marry her the next week.

Did he do it? Well, at that, he might have done worse. But Luck had played favorites about long enough. And, even while he and Iris were picking out the site for their Prairie Avenue forty-room nest, Mother Destiny was doing a double roll on the door knocker.

It had to happen some time, of course. It was bound to. It's a wonder it hadn't come earlier. But it seems almost a pity it couldn't have waited just a week.

A New York theatrical man who'd made a pot of money with a cheap cabaret, and had lately gone into the producing end of the show business, blew into Chicago. Three days before the wedding date. He was at a restaurant with the manager of Iris's show. And the manager hauled him across to a window table where La Salle and Iris were cooing at each other.

It was Iris's ultimate coo. The New Yorker slapped her friendlily on the shoulder and asked her whose cabaret she'd been disfiguring since she'd left his.

La Salle smashed him on the jaw. And there was a swell-restaurant-fight story in all the papers next day that ought to have been a grand ad for Iris. But it wasn't. By that time, La Salle was halfway to Denver on a hike for Hawaii. And Iris had packed up her winnings — a twenty-thousand-dollar squaring cheque from La Salle among them—and was off for New York. Neither of them could stay to stand the gaff.

The New York manager had talked quite free and explicit and Chaucerian about Iris. Not relishing the jaw wallop, he'd told La Salle and the rest all about Iris's Gotham gaieties. He'd offered to back what he said, by fifty witnesses. But he didn't have to. No one wanted to go any deeper into it.

There was a roar of laughter from Chicagoans that hadn't been buncoed, and there was just as explosive a silence from those who had. They're still telling the story out there. Those who aren't still paying to try to get it hushed up.

Back to New York comes Iris with all the spoils of war. She'd figured it would be a dead easy trick to try the same thing in any big city. But there's where young La Salle flashed a streak of ecru. He sent word to her that he was going to keep her under his eye, by putting private detectives on the job; and that he'd expose her in every city she went to, here or abroad.

Dirty of him, wasn't it? And it was

the only thing that kept Iris Thayne from coining a cosy fortune without losing one shred of reputation. I've always had a morbid yearning to kick La Salle for that.

Still, Iris was pretty comfortable as she was. If she'd used her money sanely and sold her Tiffany hardware to the right advantage, she'd have had the wolf a whole mile away from the door, all her days.

But she'd been bitten by the finance tarantula, out there in Chicago. She had seen how easy a milkpailful of money could be harvested by the right kind of speculating. In fact, La Salle and others had taken several little fliers for her and she had always won big. They'd explained the system to her until she knew exactly how to place every investment so that it couldn't lose.

And with this knowledge she tackled Wall Street; first converting all her jewelry into ready. She wanted to be more than just comfortable. She wanted to live as she had gotten into the way of living in Chicago. She knew that one successful clean-up in Wall Street would do it for her.

So she hunted out a lot of investments and sorted them over. And I don't need to tell you she picked out the one whose prospectus promised the most. A regular springtime prospectus of the "get rich quick" breed. Iris put every dollar into the venture.

When I met her a couple of months afterward, she'd just been turned down by the tenth booking agent she'd applied to. You see, her looks had all at once begun to go backward. And she'd developed Bright's disease from overworry and from high living that she wasn't used to.

I'd known her in the old days. I'd—I'd cared for her, too. And I'd missed her while she was away. More'n I liked to miss anyone. From time to time in the next six months I heard bits of the story, till I had about all of it. After that—

"Well," finished Raegan, scowling hideously at the burnt-out stub of his cigar—"there wasn't any 'after that.' She—she was the girl I told you about, a while back. The one who promised me her grave would look so pretty. And it didn't. She was fond of promising—up to the very end. Like I said.

"Yes, spring's a grand season," he ended, irrelevantly. "Except maybe between the first of April and the first of July."



SOMEHOW or other when a girl's foot accidentally touches ours under a table we immediately imagine she's crazy about us.



ONE of my dearest hopes is to have enough presence of mind left to pull off some heroic language just as I'm about to croak.



THE man I thought I envied more than any other man in the world was so unhappy that he shot himself.

LO, "THE GREAT AMERICAN NOVEL"

By E. DeVaux

THERE is a rumor from Publishers' Row that the filing of an affidavit similar in form to the following will hereafter be a necessary preliminary on the part of authors in submitting the manuscripts of novels for publication:

Know all Men by these Presents, the undersigned, "Pro Bono Publico," deposes and says:

That he is the author of a novel of 85,000 words, more or less, entitled, "John Doe and Richard Roe, the Twain Euphonious and Inseparable;"

That the story is *not* rendered into modern English from an original manuscript written by the great-grandfather of the author, and found in a certain oaken chest or secret drawer;

That it is *not* a memoir, diary or record of events that happened in the reign of the "Good Queen Bess," or of the most valiant monarch, Louis the 101st, or of any other sovereign, prince or potentate;

That it contains not a single reference to suits of armor, dungeons, *lettres-de-cachet* or privy-seals; nor to Knights of the This and That or Lords of the Thus and So;

That he (the author) hereby covenants and agrees, if, among its pages, a duel be fought or a solitary sword even so much as leaps from its scabbard, to forfeit his entire right, title and interest in the manuscript to the discoverer of such duel or of such sword leaping from its scabbard;

That the author hereby still further covenants and agrees (on his part) to the exclusion from the book of Author's Foreword, Explanatory Notes, Sketches of "The Author and the Book," and his Picture;

That the book is written (to the best of his knowledge) in United States English (save the mark!), and contains no quotations of any kind, save those of the Stock Exchange (and these not from choice, but of necessity);

That the story treats of the lives of John Doe and Richard Roe, but not of their Adventures (praise God, they had none!), and, incidentally, of the most modest damsel, Virgin Page, who at all times appears most becomingly habited (generally bound in cloth), never once donning doublet and hose or other male attire.

The author further covenants and agrees, provided the sales of this book exceed 75,000 copies, under no circumstances to attempt the writing of any novel or tale after the manner and style of the story herein named, and, to evade a possible temptation so to do, he hereby binds himself for the term of three years from the date of the publication of the book herein named, to write "pot-boilers," or, in other words, the text that accompanies the illustrations in the up-to-date ten cent magazines, thus absolutely precluding the production of *literary* work of whatsoever description during the time specified;

And finally,

That the author covenants and agrees in no event to give his consent to the dramatization of this story under a term of seventy-five years from date of

publication, it being his most cherished wish that, for at least three-quarters of a century, "John Doe and Richard Roe, the Twain Euphonious and Inseparable," shall be subjected to no profaner touch than the mellowing one of time.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this —— day of ——, in the year one thousand nine hundred.

"PRO BONO PUBLICO."
(*Author's Signature*).

Sealed and Delivered in the Presence of
"A DELIGHTED CONTEMPORANEOUS OPINION."
(*Signature of Witness*).

THE MAID OF THE WOOD

By Richard Butler Glaenzer

I SOUGHT my love at home, at home,
On village green, in field and wood;
And sweet was one and fleet was one
And one was simply good.
But she who was sweet refused to roam,
And she who was fleet outstripped my pace,
And she who was good was only good,
Lacking a comely face.

I sought my love afar, afar,
On city street, at play and booth;
And bold was one and cold was one
And one was straight as truth.
But she who was cold was as a star,
And she who was bold soon flickered out,
And she of the truth demanded truth
And fled my arms in doubt.

So back I went alone, alone,
And, lonely, deemed it wise to wed
Her of the wood, the simply good:
The youth in me was dead.
But the house in the wood was like a stone,
And the face once good was hard and grey.
I can hear her now: "Your love is dead;
You took her heart away!"

THE PACT

By Harris Merton Lyon

THERE is something fascinating to haphazard humanity in the idea of the goddess Nemesis. Though the ages of human experience on this earth teach us that surely there is such a force as this goddess personified, yet on any occasion when we have accurately seen for ourselves a criminal pursued and struck down by what seems a Divine Hand, we are stunned with amazement. The old Greeks, who regarded their gods with sensible awe, yet who still felt that they had emotions and incentives quite human, called her simply "the one from whom there is no escape." Nemesis was to distribute (*νέμειν*) justice.

In our more modern time, when worship of the Galilean has brought with it a sort of daedal mysticism, we are apt to regard the workings of Nemesis rather in the words of Addison: "No human scheme can be so accurately projected but some little circumstance intervening may spoil it. He who directs the heart of man at His pleasure, and understands the thoughts long before, may by ten thousand accidents, or an immediate change . . . disconcert the most subtle project, and turn it to the benefit of His own servants."

That is to say, the schemer, even though he put through his scheme, can never tell in what time vengeance may come upon him. Nemesis may dog the criminal tediously through "ten thousand accidents" which may seem to have no separate meaning at all until *en masse* they have trapped him and pinned him down. Or it may bring him up short "with an immediate change." It may move in ambush through long years, allowing the criminal in his folly to think that Retribution is as dead as the crime itself. Or it may come as sudden as the blazing bolt with the thunderclap at its side.

It was in this latter fashion that it settled its score with Clandehill.

The bodies of the banker Clandehill and his mistress, Marie Jorgsen, a governess in the employ of his family, were found one October morning in a room on the second floor of a mean rooming-house in West 36th Street, New York. Death was obviously caused by suicide; and the newspapers stated that the tragedy was the result of a suicide pact. Certain evidence, such as the autopsy showing the woman to have been in a delicate condition, bore out this view. But then, evidently, the newspapers had again forgotten M. Lecoq's good formula: "Always distrust what seems probable."

Why, for instance, should Clandehill have been in disguise?

The truth is, it was Clandehill's intention to lure the woman into a suicide pact and then desert her after her death. It was with this intention that he disguised himself in a rough Norfolk suit and tattered old cap, rubbed his hands and face with the temporary dark stain and wore the smoked glasses. It was with this intention that he kept the assignation that night in the obscure rooming-house.

An interesting figure of a criminal. By no means attractive in appearance, yet here he had got a grown woman infatuated with him, assenting to die with him—for love. A man tall, about fifty, his red hair beginning to get scanty atop of his long, mulish head; his eyes when opened (he generally

allowed the lids to droop) displaying that lashless, seemingly sore appearance which goes with a certain shade of red hair. His parrot-nose curved in sympathy with the cynicism of his face. His fish-like mouth, with corners down, sneered in symmetry . . . something of fish-blood was in his blood, too. Rather a stoop-shouldered man, with arms so long his hands seemed banging about his knees. Curious hands, of long, brittle bones and fingers that ran straight out, like cylinders, hairy and puffed. A sudden abdomen amid the stretch of his straightness jutted directly out as if a small watermelon was fastened under his shirt.

Women have loved unprepossessing men before this, however. They say they can forgive a man much for his manners. Clandehill could be the most obliging and pleasantest-mannered of men; there was a sort of intimate and affectionate politeness about his behavior. So few men will move themselves at all, stir themselves out of their mood unless it be for their own profit. In the bank, Clandehill had learned the value of courteous enthusiasm; and his suavity was so spontaneous that his disposition seemed all the more admirable.

Underneath this epidermis of generosity, however, the vitals of the man were selfish. He had the soul of a successful business man who had achieved his success without the use of any imagination. Physically, he was cold. Mentally, he was strict and cruel. And he was a coward. With the ferocity of weakness he could readily wish an enemy or troublesome person dead; but he lacked the nerve to commit the murder. For instance, he had the cunning to conceive this bogus suicide-pact and the mental cruelty to carry it out; but he lacked the power of physically focussing himself long enough to take this silly woman in his hands and kill her.

It was a drizzly, foggy night, obscured by heaps of mists shoveled slowly about by a weak wind . . . one of those nights which gives to each who walks in it a sense of complete, and compact, loneliness; as if a sense-proof wall were between the walker and the world, as if there were nothing social on this earth and each man's deeds and moods were the do-all and be-all and must go unchallenged. A night for misery and mystery.

At the southwest corner of 36th Street and Broadway a woman, holding a mackintosh cape up half-over her face, met him. She was utterly unnerved and began at once with a tremulous voice to moan: "Oh-h-h, Phil . . . Oh-h-h, Phil." That was all.

With a powerful movement he jerked her violently down the street, westward, into the darkness. "Now, look here, Marie," he started to say, his face livid, his eyes burning beneath the disguise. Then he remembered his *rôle*. "Honey—did you get the room—where I told you to?"

"Yes. Oh-h-h, Phil. I c-can't do it. I'm afraid—"

"Did you get the—the—"

"Yes."

"The way you said?"

"Yes. Phil, I'll never be able to—"

"What did you tell the nurse you wanted it for?"

"Oh, I told her to kill one of Mrs. Clandehill's dogs that had bitten Sonny."

Down the dismal street they plodded, the woman wretchedly weak and trembling, leaning heavily on his arm and essaying from time to time to stifle her whimpering long enough to address him. The gloomy fog rolled against the rotten brown house fronts and the sodden drizzle soaked steadily down as if these agents of Heaven meant to keep the street empty and so to cloak the wretched pair against any curious inquiry.

Scarcely more tangible they seemed than two bent, heavy shadows, black against the gray darkness. Yet "slop-slop, slop-slop" went the feet of the two doomed lovers—a sordid approach to the contemplated glory of their self-immolation.

For long minutes they had not spoken. Then by a quick pressure,

Marie checked him and as quickly turned in at a dimly-lighted door.

Clandehill's first act was to look dubiously but steadily about him up and down the street. Then, as the woman was about to unlock the door, he held her back and spoke. Involuntarily he adopted a strained, guttural whisper; and she instinctively did the same. This they kept up throughout the entire duration of their conversation. The whisper would crack from time to time, as their throats became dry. The effect, hideously comic.

"You didn't mention anything about a man coming to see you?"

"No. I just told her I was all alone. I rented the room for a week."

"Where is the room?"

"Second floor back, left-hand side. Oh-h, Phil, I—"

"For God's sake, get inside and see if there is any one in the hall. I don't want 'em to see me."

She reconnoitred, came back and, unstable from terror, led him falteringly up. The stairs and hallways were covered with a lush, pulpy compost of rotten carpet and soggy old newspapers so that they gave out not the slightest sound. Not even a board creaked. So far as the silence was concerned one might have thought he was treading thick moss in a deep forest. She let him into the room—a clammy thing of four walls, grimy ceiling, filthy floor; a bed, a wash table, two chairs, a lounge and a stench. The stench had gathered in that place, as ghosts gather in a graveyard, from all the effluvia of the countless drippings of human garbage that had fallen so low as to be compelled to occupy that room . . . miserable opium fiends, almost penniless whiskey wrecks, cocaine-laden drabs of the streets. Moth-eaten and reeking, this was the unconsecrated ground upon which they had chosen to cast themselves. Clandehill shuddered with disgust. In that delirious throwback of the human mind which is always seeking contrast, he thought at once of the warmth and richness of his Park Avenue home at that hour, his wife sitting in the library by the cosey fireplace, his son Rob reading to her.

But the die was cast. Many men have laid plans to kill women for much pettier reasons than he had for getting rid of Marie Jorgsen. The annals of crime reveal thousands of cases in which the motive is contemptibly small. In thousands more there is shown not even a desperate need to do the deed. Clandehill had a strong motive; and he was at the top point of desperation. A woman thirty-three years of age, Marie had not only been determined to give birth to their child, but she had also insisted that when the time came (which she should signify) the child's paternity should be announced. These stipulations might have been silenced as, blackmail or by the paying of blackmail. But, in addition, she was determined that she had a right to share fully all of her lover's life . . . that was her phrase. After the birth of her child, she meant that nothing else should be clandestine. She was of that curiously obstinate type of woman, the "clinging vine" type . . . incidentally the type which is always getting into what is euphemistically known as "trouble." Her insistence upon hanging onto Clandehill, under the guise of her great love for him and with the plea that she couldn't bear to live with him out of her sight . . . such things not only cloy mawkishly, they are absolutely dangerous. There was no doubt that Marie was stickily in love with him; but she blocked him off from liberty. There was no escape. Caught in one of those casual traps in which even a fox sometimes sets his foot, Clandehill, who was far from being the last word in sagacity, had to play a part. Over and over; and over and over; pro and con; and back and forth they had discussed the situation, she tearfully and caressingly insistent, he furtive and harassed, with what hopeless loopings-back of talk and twistings and re-startings only men and women who have been through such discussions can know. The sight of her sickened him;

the whine of her voice sickened him. And then—in the burst of a moment, this scheme of the pact had occurred to him. It had shocked and dismayed her at first. He had needed to convince her that it was "noble" . . . it was "the one way out" . . . it would "show the world" . . .

She went over limply and lit the doddering, forlorn gas jet. The thrifty landlady, by tinkering with the tip, had fixed it so that there was scarce one-fourth the due amount of gas; and so the light that was shed over the tragedy was sickly, moribund, almost the corpse of a flame.

It was enough of a light, however, to show that Marie was a rather plump, good-looking woman of medium height. A blonde, with a fashionable trimness about her, a hint of the *chic* of the metropolis. Her blue eyes were large and pleading; but now her features were marred by weeping, and she had the limp, half-fainting air of a woman stricken by grief. She came over, knelt and put her head in her companion's lap. A blind and unhealthy, suffocating sort of love . . . demanding always the presence of the beloved, that he may be fondled with kisses, touched with hands, enlivened by perfect Cupid's-bow smiles or dewed with amorous tears generally called up by some imaginary woe. As for duplicity, Marie had no more of it than a bleating lamb. She could have sat for hours content to hold this curious man's hand. And since the advent of her "trouble" she had redoubled her profferings of endearment. A simple, wretched, obstinate, loving woman.

Clandehill fairly gritted his teeth as she laid her head on his knee and began sobbing. But he controlled himself and asked: "What was that you said, honey?"

"I said—our—last — night — on — earth."

For answer he patted her hair and looked in a scared fashion around the tawdry room.

She raised her head. "Phil, c-can we do it?"

He looked straight at her. "We must."

Again she began a mournful repetition of "Oh-h-oh-oh."

"Ssh. Not so loud, Marie. Some one might hear us. You—you are sure we aren't followed? I mean"—hastily—"no one knows I am here? Ever since Rollins' trial—you know, I testified against him—he was sent to prison—he hates me, of course—well, I've been sure—quite sure he had detectives following me—trying—trying to get the goods on me. Don't you see? They might be following me—now. I've never seen them. Never. But I'm afraid."

"Afraid?" she repeated simply, while her affection for the moment cleared the tears from her eyes and parted her lips in a rapt smile. "What is there to be afraid of, dear? We shall be in another world . . . and together."

"Yes, oh, yes . . . of course," he answered abstractedly. "I simply didn't want my wife to suffer."

She never even noticed the incongruity of his reply. She said merely, "Phil, dearest," in a reproachful tone.

Again he gave that frightened look around, and rubbed his lips with the back of his hand to moisten them. The constant whispering was making his voice crack. Then he broke out hastily: "Oh, there's lots of things to think about before the—before we do the—before *that*. Now, for instance, there's nothing to identify us, is there? Come now, honey, think carefully. Think of every little thing that my little honey might have that would tell who she is; because, of course, it would be better for us to—go—in obscurity, you know—without anybody knowing." She saw not the flaw in this, that a governess might readily disappear, but that Clandehill, the banker, would be sought for in a thousand ways.

She looked at him with large, innocent eyes and slowly shook her head.

"Now," he coaxed, ingratiatingly, "think carefully, honey. Your nurse friend who gave you the—"

"She sailed yesterday for the Mediterranean, with an invalid."

"Ah . . . and now, maybe . . . on your clothes?"

She looked at him, this time in mild wonderment. "Why, Phil, I did just as you told me to . . . I cut off all the tags."

"Yes. Yes. Of course." For the first time he looked keenly at her clothing. She had not taken off her hat and had merely unbuttoned her mackintosh. Yet he could see that, womanlike, in this passionate extremity she had dressed herself in her very best. With a bantering exclamation, he remarked: "Do you think you can take the styles to Heaven with you?"

This foolish remark caused an amazing outburst from the woman. "Don't talk like that! Don't talk like that, Phil," she cried in a hoarse whisper. "I can't believe you when you do. You make me afraid. Afraid of you. All along I've been afraid to do—this. I've only been held up to the determination by you—you know that—by knowing you love me—by knowing you're coming along with me. And when you talk that way—sarcastic . . . sarcastic, Phil, at such a time, my God! . . . I just lose all hope and belief and faith in everything. Oh, Phil, you do love me, don't you? You are sincere, aren't you? My God, aren't you?" She had stood up and recoiled a bit from him.

With a ghastly attempt at blandishment in his voice, which turned for a moment from the whisper into a falsetto, he replied: "Why, Marie, of course I love you." He caught her and put his arms around her. "Of course, poor little loving heart, I am coming along with you. Don't be afraid. Don't be afraid."

She clung against him and moaned: "Oh, but I am afraid. I am. I don't see how women have the courage for this." Suddenly she pushed him back and said pleadingly: "Phil, swear it."

"What?" he asked, soothingly.

"Swear by God that you go along with me tonight."

"What?" he asked in amazement.

"Swear it," she insisted, obstinately.

With an effort he lifted his arm, his voice rising to a cold, precise tone, as he declaimed: "As sure as there is a God in Heaven I will go with you this night. May God strike me dead if I don't!"

There was dead silence after this vow. Marie looked at her lover with an enraptured expression, then slowly pulled his head down until his lips almost touched hers. "I believe you, Phil. Seal it with a kiss."

He kissed her. Then laughed a bit in a slightly crazed fashion. "This makes a person nervous, doesn't it?" he asked. He pulled a flask of brandy from his pocket and looked around.

A peculiar thought struck him. "I forgot to bring a glass—or, I mean, glasses—for the . . . Did you?"

She stared at him. "Yes. So I did. I forgot, too."

He went to the washstand, rummaged and found an old toothbrush glass. He washed it out and poured her a stiff drink of the liquor.

"I—I will drink out of the bottle," he remarked. He swallowed several long gulps and replaced the flask in his pocket. Again he wiped his lips nervously with the back of his hand.

Something seemed to occur to him. He paused in the gesture. "And—of course—when the time comes—I will drink out of your bottle, too. You use the glass . . . for the . . ."

She shuddered, put her arm before her eyes and turned away.

"Don't you love me?" he pursued. "You must do as I say, Marie. Listen. We will never accomplish it at all unless you do as I say—absolutely."

Still with her back turned, she gave a weary consent: "All right."

There was another silence, in which he stood gazing at her back, his fingers tapping his lips in meditative fashion. "You—you didn't write any letter or any note or anything, did you? I mean, anything that would be found . . . after . . ." he tapped his lips . . . "to show why you—why we, I mean . . ."

She shook her head. "Of course not."

"Of course. Of course."

By an instinct, they both sat down together on the edge of the bed. At once, Marie put her arms about his neck and fell to sobbing on his shoulder. He held his hands straight down in front of him and stared out dumbly in a stupor. With the exception of the moaning sound of the woman, the room was as silent as death. And this silence continued. The man made no attempt to move, to speak, to utter a sound. He seemed rigid with fascination, the fascination of his own thoughts. It was so quiet that, as the woman caught her breath between her dolorous whimperings, he could hear the ticking of his watch. In his trance he could visualize the little rapid second hand, jerking itself about its circle in a monotonous vertigo. This finally caused him to reflect that time was passing.

Then, in order to stupefy himself for the act, he got out the brandy flask again. This added another sound: the squeaking of the cork as he twisted it out of the neck of the bottle and in again. With never a word, and only the movements necessary, he uncorked the bottle, gulped, gave a gagging gasp at the strength of the brandy, corked the bottle again . . . paused a few moments . . . uncorked, gulped, gasped, corked. And so on, the shrill squeaks gritting through the air. Occasionally the retch of his spasmodic strangulation . . . then the ticking of the watch, the moaning of the terrified woman. By the time the pint was nearly drunk his features had sunk from their tightened-up fascination into the sodden, heavy lines which express dulled sensibilities. Red, hairy, thickened with liquor, he rolled a bit on his haunches, breathed stertorously and blinked his eyes; but still he did not speak.

He was revolving in his mind any possibilities that he might be discovered, that he might fail to escape. Of course, there was none. Everything had been arranged. Marie would be found dead in the morning, an unknown woman in a low rooming-house, whose reason for poisoning herself would be immediately apparent upon the most superficial investigation. She had no friends. It was simple. Such cases occurred by the dozens. But he had an obstinate notion that Rollins really might have detectives watching him. Rollins, even in Atlanta penitentiary, would be working for revenge. He did not know of any detectives, had never seen them. The fancy was probably absurd. Of course it was. He was too wrought up. Of course . . .

He wet his brandy-thickened lips with his tongue, got up, ran his hand through his hair, then patted the woman on the shoulder. She had hidden her face, prone on the bed.

In a roughened mutter, he spoke: "Come — Marie — sweetheart! It's time."

He bent and kissed her forehead as she turned. He tried to steady her to her feet, but she sank to the floor, clutched his knees and gazed up at him with an imploring glance.

"Phil, listen," she cried. "These may be my last words. I love you. I've loved you ever since the day I first met you—when you came to talk to me about Robert that afternoon up in the country—how well I remember the day—it was June—we were in the rose arbor—you called me Marie and said my name ought to be Rose, I looked so in place among the roses. You were always saying pretty things like that. And you told me afterward that you had fallen in love with me, too—at first sight. Then slowly I came to know that we were meant for each other from the first and that anything we did would not be a crime in the sight of God—you remember, *you* said that yourself—"

"God, yes," said the man, with evident emotion, "but don't—not now—don't—"

"I must speak. It is the last I shall ever, ever say. I have never loved but once and I love you to the uttermost—to the end of everything—to . . . *this*. I never dreamed that it would come to this—never—but now that it has come I go to my God gladly, freely, sure that

He will understand a woman's love and forgive. Just as you said, this is after all the only noble way out for so noble a thing as our love. We could not go on living and let it all become just a sordid mess, for people to sneer at and gossip about and make scandal over. Oh, Phil, Phil, Phil, I love you—that's all—I am willing to do everything, anything, as I have already done everything for that love—I love you, Phil—these are my dying words—my last words on earth—I—"

"Yes, Marie." He squeezed his hand across his eyes as if to obliterate the effect of her words in one desperate clutch. "My God, honey, I understand. Quick—give me your—the bottle. Quick—if you don't, by God, I can't do it!"

She rose to her feet with the look of a somnambulist and brought out the little bottle from the pocket of her raincoat. Then with trembling hands, she removed the coat and her hat. From habit, the wretched woman even brushed back her hair with her hand.

Again with that scared look around the room, Clandehill reached out, fumbled the glass, dropped it, and picked it up again. The crash of the glass seemed to upset the woman's nerves. At once she lost her previous exaltation and became hysterical, moaning dismally and but half-looking at the horrible preparations.

The murderer poured a moiety of the poison into the glass, retaining under his index finger the other half of the stuff in the phial. It was cyanide of potassium.

"Come," he said, handing her the glass.

She broke out, wailing, "Oh, I know I'll never be able to do it." Trembling, tottering, almost letting the liquid spill, she reiterated this phrase.

He put his arm around her and held his hand, containing the half-filled bottle, close beside her hand, so that she could see his intention to drink with her.

He began in a declamatory whisper, rather as if repeating an instruction for her benefit than as if the formula sincerely affected him: "We two from our deep love for one another, have decided to die together . . ."

"Oh, God, I'll never be able to do it!"

"We die forgiving the world and hoping the world will forgive us as we know God will forgive us . . ."

"I'll never, never be able to do it!"

"We go to meet our God clasped in each other's arms . . . together . . . together . . . as in life so in death . . ."

"Phil, remember your oath, what you swore . . ."

"I remember."

"You swore by God, Phil . . . together, together, Phil. Oh, I'll never, never be able to . . ."

"Drink!"

With a spasmodic motion of her arm, which accomplished its purpose even while she tried half-heartedly to check it in mid-air, the woman drank. In fifteen seconds she was dead.

With a faint, dull, idiotic smile he set down the bottle and wiped the index finger which had checked the poison at his lips. But whatever mean and fatuous sense of triumph he may have had gave way in a flash to horror when his eyes suddenly lit upon the dead woman's face. It was rather as if the shock of the physical death had blotted out any spiritual dread that might have assailed him. The features he had so often kissed had at once become so puffed, brutalized and filled with a vulgar, menacing strength that at first nauseated him, then shook him with a profound, unintelligible fear. The face seemed to express a stubborn, purposeful determination.

He leaned toward her, then drew back. The shock was decidedly physical. It was impossible to believe that this sodden meatiness was the same bland, amorous flesh that had once warmed and delighted him. How sullen now the trig Cupid's-bow mouth; how goitre-like the rolls of the fat neck; how squat, bloated, misproportioned she somehow seemed, there on the floor. With no sprightly motion to carry her, how heavy, lumpy she looked

who once had been so adroit and alluring. And he had done it, had brought it about. Yet, after all, it was the face that frightened him . . . its uncouth, persistent obstinacy . . .

With a gesture as if to say, "I must get out of here," he started across the dim room toward the door, breathing aloud in short, groaning, complaining gasps, stumbling slightly, both from the brandy and the sickening qualms which assailed him. Suddenly he stopped stock still in the middle of the chamber, as incapable of movement as if every joint in his body were anchylosed.

A startlingly droll expression of sheer terror appeared on his face, and the Macaber humor of his pose was enhanced by the gesture with which his hand instinctively caught at his abdomen—those fingers that ran straight out like cylinders, hairy and puffed, clutching at the belly . . . seat of fear . . . that jutted out like a small watermelon.

A hand had silently turned the knob of the door.

Clandehill crouched a little as he regarded the movement, and his brain, through sheer surprise, held taut as a spring, refused even to conjecture.

Again the hand turned the knob, slowly, deliberately, in silence.

This repeated action brought Clandehill straight up on his heels, and his brain, suddenly released, spun out in a bewildering whirl. He had been tricked! . . . Rollins . . . detectives. He looked about the room. It was a masterpiece of crime, down to the tiniest detail of the solitary glass which had fallen from the dead woman's hand and rolled to the middle of the floor, at his feet.

He licked his lips and, obeying an instinct, reached down, picked up the glass, held it in his hand. All this time he kept his eyes fixed on the menacing knob. Of course the door was locked. Would they try . . .

And at once, as if in answer, a knee was placed against the door. The door strained a bit under the pressure; settled back; was pushed again; strained again. And all this time not a word was spoken . . . sinister, absolute silence.

Whoever was on the outside had come up quietly; the pulpy halls were paths of stealth. Clandehill had had no chance to hear him.

In a moment of determination, Clandehill blurted out with a throaty croak: "Who's there?"

He paused, tapping his lips with his fingers, eyeing the door as if ready to recoil; but no one answered.

At once Clandehill chilled his heart with a conception of the frigid attitude of the law. He saw himself, a banker . . . a rather rumored-about banker, it is true, but men never realize the force of these subtleties until it is too late . . . in this disgusting situation. Worse. Incriminating. The law would deal with him. He would be arrested. On account of his disguise, the thing would be more sensational than ever. He might try to say that the woman had blackmailed him. She had said, if he didn't pay her, she would kill herself. This sort of thing had always followed her demanded rendezvous in obscure places. He had always paid, but had never taken her threats seriously. Never. He had come here tonight, thoroughly determined never to pay her another cent. Had told her so. How was he to know that she really would kill herself? But there it was. When he had refused her . . . she had killed herself.

But then . . . could that save him? He did not know the law. He would surely be arrested, he knew that; if not as murderer, at least as accessory. He feared the District Attorney, a malignantly efficient man. In any event, he was ruined. Even if he saved his skin, he would lose his position. And he could never get another; not in banking. His wife, of course, would divorce him. He was caught, cornered, done for.

In that sudden resolute fusion of the will and nerves which comes in cases of extreme cowardice or despair—cases which are at least temporary dementia—he caught up the poison bottle.

His eyes flamed with delirium and he jeered at the door in that whisper of husky raucity to which he had now become accustomed: "So, you put your shoulder to the door, too, do you?" For by now the mute, determined man in the hall was applying hand, knee and shoulder simultaneously. "You think you've got me, don't you? Caught like a rat, am I? I know you, damn you. Rollins hired you to dog me and trap me, didn't he? But he won't have that satisfaction. No, by God, he won't. No, by God. He'd like to get me into a courtroom—Shake the door! Go on, shake the door! Yah—hah! Break it in. Go on, break it in, damn you . . . You won't get anything when you do!"

He ceased abruptly and fell on his knees beside the dead woman.

"Marie," he cried, "I swore to God I'd join you." He held the bottle to his lips. "I swore to God I'd join you—and I'm keeping my word, Marie, I'm keeping my word!"

In fifteen seconds he was dead.

Stupid, leaden, silent moments passed. And then at last, retreating down the hall, came the voice of Nemesis, albeit slightly hiccoughing:

"Shouze me, folks, for buttin' in. I—ic—thought I wash on th' third floor aw' the time."

THE LOVER

By Louise Driscoll

I HEARD the wind calling the new moon's name
When the wings of the dusk spread over the trees,
And the paths became caverns of mysteries,
And one star burned like a tiny flame.

"Little Wind, what do you seek?" I said.
"Why do you go so far—so far?
Here in the wood-land wonders are,
Stay with us and be comforted!"

He did not linger to make reply
To the lovely laughter of little leaves,
But the scented spell that the wild grape weaves
He caught and carried up to the sky.

I uttered many a charm in vain,
I tried to woo with a gentian flower,
I spoke of the barberries' crimson shower,
And heard him calling the moon again.

And all night long, though I bade him stay,
He followed the moon across the sky,
He threw himself in the flood to die
When she was drowned in the break of day.

I may not tell you the new moon's name,
It is too lovely for mortal ears,
But the wood flower, waking at midnight, hears,
And the star that burns like a tiny flame.

AFTER ALL, WHAT'S THE USE?

By J. D. Gilray

"YES," said Cheops, helping his guest over a ticklish place, "I daresay this pile of rocks will last. It has cost me a pretty penny, believe me. I made up my mind at the start that it would be built of honest stone, or not at all. No cheap and shoddy brickwork for me! Look at Babylon. It's all brick, and it's always tumbling down. My ambassador there tells me that it costs a million a year to keep up the walls alone—mind you, the walls alone! What must it cost to keep up the palace, with all that fancy work!

"Yes, I grant you that brickwork *looks* good. But what of it? So does a cheap cotton night-shirt—you know the gaudy thing those Theban pedlers sell to my rough-necks down on the river bank. But does it *last?* Of course it doesn't. Well, I am putting up this pyramid to *stay* put, and I don't give a damn for its looks. I hear all sorts of funny cracks about it. My barber is a sharp nigger and keeps his ears open: he brings me all the gossip. But I let it go. This is *my* pyramid. I am putting up the money for it, and I have got to be mortared up in it when I die. So I am trying to make a good substantial job of it, and letting the mere beauty of it go hang.

"Anyhow, there are plenty of uglier things in Egypt. Look at some of those fifth-rate little pyramids up the river. When it comes to shape they are pretty much the same as this one, and when it comes to size they look like warts beside it. And look at the Sphinx. There is something that cost four millions if it cost a copper—and what is it now? A burlesque! An architectural cripple! So long as it was *new,* good enough! It was a showy piece of work. People came all the way from Sicyonia and Tyre to gape at it. Everybody said it was one of the sights no one could afford to miss. But by and by a piece began to peel off here and another piece there, and then the nose cracked, and then an ear dropped off, and then one of the eyes began to get mushy and watery-looking, and finally it was a mere smudge, a false-face, a scarecrow. My father spent a lot of money trying to fix it up, but what good did it do? By the time he had the nose repaired, the ears were loose again, and so on. In the end he gave it up as a bad job.

"Yes; this pyramid has kept me on the jump, but I'm going to stick to it if it breaks me. Some say I ought to have built it across the river, where the quarries are. Such gabble makes me sick. Do I look like a man who would go rooting around for such *child's*-play? I hope not. A one-legged man could have done *that.* Even a Babylonian could have done it. It would have been as easy as milking a cow. What *I* wanted was something that would keep me on the jump—something that would put a strain on me. So I decided to haul the whole business *across* the river—six million tons of rock. And when the engineers said that it couldn't be done, I gave them two days to get out of Egypt, and then tackled it myself. It was something new and hard. It was a job I could get my teeth into.

"Well, I suppose you know what a time I had of it at the start. First I tried a pontoon bridge, but the stones for the bottom course were so heavy

that they sank the pontoons, and I lost a couple of hundred niggers before I saw that it couldn't be done. Then I tried a big raft, but in order to get her to float with the stones I had to use such big logs that she was unwieldy, and before I knew what had struck me I had lost six big dressed stones and another hundred niggers. I got the laugh, of course. Every numskull in Egypt wagged his beard over it: I could hear the chatter myself. But I kept quiet and stuck to the problem, and by and by I solved it.

"I suppose you know how I did it. In a general way? Well, the details are simple. First I made a new raft, a good deal lighter than the old one, and then I got a thousand water-tight goat-skins and had them blown up until they were as tight as drums. Then I got together a thousand niggers who were good swimmers, and gave each of them one of the blown-up goat-skins. On each goat-skin there was a leather thong, and on the bottom of the raft, spread over it evenly, there were a thousand hooks. Do you get the idea? Yes; that's it exactly. The niggers dived overboard with the goat-skins, swam under the raft, and tied the thongs to the hooks. And when all of them were tied on, the raft floated like a bladder. You simply *couldn't* sink it.

"Naturally enough, the thing took time, and there were accidents and setbacks. For instance, some of the niggers were so light in weight that they couldn't hold their goat-skins under water long enough to get them under the raft. I had to weight some of those fellows by having rocks tied around their waists. And when they had fastened their goat-skins and tried to swim back, some of them were carried down by the rocks. I never made any exact count, but I suppose that two or three hundred of them were drowned in that way. Besides, a couple of hundred were drowned because they couldn't hold their breaths long enough to swim under the raft and back. But what of it? I wasn't trying to hoard up niggers, but to make a raft that would float. And I did it.

"Well, once I showed how it could be done, all the wiseacres caught the idea, and after that I put a big gang to work making more rafts, and by and by I had sixteen of them in operation, and was hauling more stone than the masons could set. But I won't go into all that. Here is the pyramid: it speaks for itself. One year more and I'll have the top course laid and begin on the surfacing. I am going to make it plain marble, with no fancy work. I could bring in a gang of Theban stone-cutters and have it carved all over with lions' heads and tiger claws and all that sort of gimcrackery, but why waste time and money? This isn't a menagerie, but a pyramid. My idea was to make it the boss pyramid of the world. The king who tries to beat it will have to get up pretty early in the morning.

"But what troubles I have had! Believe me, there has been nothing but trouble, trouble, trouble from the start. I set aside the engineering difficulties. They were hard for the engineers, but easy for me, once I put my mind on them. But the way these niggers have carried on has been something terrible. At the beginning I had only a thousand or two, and they all came from one tribe; so they got along fairly well. During the whole first year I doubt that more than twenty or thirty were killed in fights. But then I began to get fresh batches from up the river, and after that it was nothing but one fight after another. For two weeks running not a stroke of work was done. I really thought, at one time, that I'd have to give up. But finally the army put down the row, and after a couple of hundred of the ringleaders had been thrown into the river, peace was restored. But it cost me, first and last, fully three thousand niggers, and set me back at least six months.

"Then came the so-called labor unions, and the strikes, and more trouble. These labor unions were started by a couple of smart, yellow niggers from Chaldea, one of them a sort of lay

preacher, a fellow with a lot of gab. Before I got wind of them, they had gone so far it was almost impossible to squelch them. First I tried conciliation, but it didn't work a bit. They made the craziest demands you ever heard of—a holiday every six days, meat every day, no night work and regular houses to live in. Some of them even had the effrontery to ask for money! Think of it! Niggers asking for money! Finally, I had to order out the army again and let some blood. But every time one was knocked over, I had to get another one to take his place, and that meant sending the army up the river, and more expense, and more devilish worry and nuisance.

"In my grandfather's time niggers were honest and faithful workmen. You could take one fresh from the bush, teach him to handle a shovel or pull a rope in a year or so, and after that he was worth almost as much as he could eat. But the nigger of to-day isn't worth a damn. He never does an honest day's work if he can help it, and he is forever wanting something. Take these fellows I have now—mainly young bucks from around the First Cataract. Here are niggers who never saw baker's bread or butcher's meat until my men grabbed them. They lived there in the bush like so many hyenas. They were ten days' march from a lemon. Well, now they get first-class beef twice a week, good bread and all the fish they can catch. They don't have to begin work until broad daylight, and they lay off at dark. There is hardly one of them that hasn't got a banjo, a harp or some other musical instrument. If they want to dress up and make believe they are Egyptians, I give them clothes. If one of them is killed on the work, or by a stray lion, or in a fight, I have him embalmed by my own embalmers and plant him like a man. If one of them breaks a leg or loses an arm or gets too old to work, I turn him loose without complaining, and he is free to go home if he wants to.

"But are they contented? Do they show any gratitude? Not at all. Scarcely a day passes that I don't hear of some fresh soldiering. And, what is worse, they have stirred up some of my own people—the carpenters, stone-cutters, gang bosses and so on. Every now and then my inspectors find some rotten libel cut on a stone—something to the effect that I am overworking them, and knocking them about, and holding them against their will, and generally mistreating them. I haven't the slightest doubt that some of these inscriptions have actually gone into the pyramid: it's impossible to watch every stone. Well, in the years to come, they will be dug out and read by strangers, and I will get a black eye. People will think of Cheops as a heartless old rapscallion—*me*, mind you! Can you beat it?"

THE NEXT NUMBER OF SMART SET

will contain "Search Me!" a one-act play by C. D. Morgan, setting forth what happened when a French actress encountered a susceptible customs official.

AUNT HÉRISSON

By Eugène Brieux

THE two gaily dressed young men, mounted on thoroughbred horses, burst out laughing as they left the Vichy road to take that which led into the forest.

"Oh, look at that horse!"

"And the man on him!"

Certainly these two young men were ungenerous. But it must be admitted also that Cyril, the servant of Mlle. de Saint-Juirs, made a singular figure on his mare Leda, riding about twenty yards behind his mistress.

"Eh, my friend!"

Cyril, without suspecting, turned in his saddle and took off his hat. He could not imagine that these strangers were making fun of him. To accompany mademoiselle on her morning ride, he had brushed up his blue livery that very morning. Doubtless the color of it was faded, the copper buttons were tarnished, the ripped seams showed the thread which the sun and weather had turned yellow; doubtless it was too long and too large; but Cyril was ignorant of all that because his wife, before letting him go out, had "passed him in review" as he said, and had declared finally that he was "as beautiful as a star."

What was it then that made these men laugh? It was not Leda surely. She was the color of "D'Artagnan's horse," but Cyril could never have believed that anyone could laugh at this good old mare, as badly groomed as her master, it is true, but, like him, a good worker; and no more could he find it extraordinary that she should be employed today to bring in grain and tomorrow to follow at a discreet distance her mistress on her rides.

"Eh, my friend, pardon me—is this horse entered for the race at Longchamps?"

"You do not see then," said the other, "that it is a trotter."

"How many prizes have you already won?"

Cyril did not respond, but he became very red, and he urged on Leda a little to get closer to his mistress.

The young men had no trouble in keeping up with them.

"It's a race then!"

They were in the forest. Mlle. de Saint-Juirs could hear now the pointless jesting of the two young fellows. Feeling that flight was impossible, suddenly she reined in her horse and waited. She was a tall and beautiful girl. The ride, the fresh air, and now also indignation, had increased her color and given a sparkle to her blue eyes. Her delicate nostrils fluttered like the heart of a wounded bird. She bit her lip and held herself erect in her stirrups, her whip partly raised, trembling with anger.

The young men had brought their blooded animals to a walk and came on shamefacedly but still with a leering smile on their lips. One of them was about to speak, but did not have an opportunity, for a young man on horseback just then came out of the shrubbery behind them, and before they had time to collect themselves he had struck their horses two vigorous blows with a hunting whip. The noble animals made a leap and went off at a gallop, frightened and resisting all the efforts of their riders, who made a ridiculous appearance, leaning back and wabbling from right to left at every

jolt. When nothing more could be seen down the road but a cloud of dust, the young man bowed.

"Now, Cousin," said he, "let's go back. I cannot let you ride alone any more, when the season brings to Vichy persons like those."

Mlle. de Saint-Juirs and her cousin, George de Sernay, were lovers. They quietly took the road to the château without any suspicion that the little incident which had just terminated was going to make so many complications and cause them so much trouble.

* * *

In the *salon* was standing, between the windows, Aunt Hérisson, a little old lady with white corkscrew curls. Mme. de Saint-Juirs had died when her daughter Marcelle was only three years old, and the good old aunt had raised her as though she had been her own child.

At first there had been quite a little talk, but the gentle goodness of Mlle. Hérisson, as well as the admirable conduct of de Saint-Juirs, a true country gentleman with a high complexion, strong as a Turk and gentle as a lamb, had quickly put the gossips to silence. He had once fought, while serving in his regiment, a famous duel, in which he had the misfortune to kill his adversary, and this also helped to make him respected.

This duel was also a subject of eternal discussion between him and Aunt Hérisson. In her eyes her brother-in-law was a sort of criminal; and although she had for him at heart a sincere affection, she was too obstinate and too stern to pardon this transgression. It had left her with a hundredfold greater hatred for dueling, which she never called by any other name than murder.

When Marcelle had reached her twentieth year, they began to make plans for her marriage, although Aunt Hérisson felt that it was too early and that they should not try to influence the young girl. She took pains to keep all officers at a distance, remembering de Saint-Juirs' duel. It was a useless precaution; Marcelle had no need of any influence. She had picked out her cousin, George de Sernay, a gallant and attractive young man. The many objections made were refuted, and they began to prepare the château for the evening of the betrothal, the date for which was set, and to which all the aristocracy of the neighborhood was to be invited.

The next day George was seated at the table in the casino of Vichy when two young men approached him.

"Pardon, Monsieur," said one, very red, "were you not riding horseback yesterday in the forest?"

"I was, Monsieur."

"If I am not deceived, you constituted yourself a defender of a farm workman."

"Whom you insulted. Then you were the impertinent person who—"

"I do not take lessons from anyone, Monsieur."

"It is unfortunate," said George, "for you need them."

"You are insolent!"

George raised his arm, but was able to control himself. He said, however, through clenched teeth:

"Consider your ears boxed, Monsieur."

Cards were exchanged; witnesses were conferred with; the weapon chosen was the sword; and the meeting was fixed for the following morning.

* * *

George, who had arrived first, had taken off his coat and was waiting. A bird near him on a branch began to sing his cheerful song, and the young man thought that perhaps it was the last time he would see the sun rise. Then he thought of Marcelle.

The umpire, holding at arm's length the swords by the points, presented them to the duelists, and retreating quickly said, "Proceed, Monsieurs."

George put himself on guard as he had learned at the fencing school, resting lightly on both feet, his left hand above his head, his right arm extended. He was not a little surprised to see his adversary, instead of imitating him,

leap backward, holding his rapier in the attitude of a fisherman who wishes to reach the middle of the river without wetting his boots.

George advanced, pressing upon his opponent's rapier. His adversary jumped about with little leaps, his feet together, constantly thrusting his arm forward. George had difficulty not to laugh.

He made two big steps forward, pressing in upon his opponent, cried "One, two—" threw his strength into a final lunge—and finished quite simply by striking his fist on the point of his adversary's sword.

The others threw themselves between the combatants. George's hand bled a great deal. He insisted upon continuing, but he felt his forearm weakening and he was obliged to yield to the advice of his friends. The witnesses and his adversary were as pale as death, and everyone except George uttered a sigh of relief.

* * *

Let us return now to the château of Saint-Juirs, two days after the deeds which we have just recounted. It is evening. Everyone is gathered in the *salon,* where Aunt Hérisson is reading the *Nouvelliste de l'Allier* through her gold-rimmed glasses, the branches of which are passed under her carefully rolled English curls. M. de Saint-Juirs and his daughter are studying over the list of invitations which they have prepared for the approaching betrothal reception. George is drinking a cup of tea.

To explain his wound and his arm in a sling (to which Aunt Hérisson has already directed suspicious eyes), he has told her that he has fallen down the front steps. His wound is, besides, for his pretty fiancée, the pretext for a thousand caresses. Marcelle has sugared her friend's tea, stirred it for him, blown on it, and even, I believe, turning her back on her aunt, she tasted it, the little mischief!

But what has happened? Suddenly Aunt Hérisson takes off her glasses, rubs them thoroughly and puts them on again. Then she approaches the lamp, holding her paper close under the light, and, her nose in the air, she reads, with a countenance filled with dismay, stopping several times because the hastily adjusted glasses insist on falling over on one side.

"What's the matter, Aunt?"

Everybody stops to look at her and wonders what grave news causes her such emotion.

"Let us see," said M. de Saint-Juirs, as she remained silent. "If you do not wish to tell us anything, let us have the lamp, so that we can finish the rest of our invitations."

"The list of invitations! The list of invitations! Here's what I will do to that!" And before they had time to prevent her, Aunt Hérisson had seized the sheet of paper, torn it into four parts and thrown it on the floor.

"What is the matter?"

"The matter is, Monsieur, that I do not wish a murderer in my house."

She turned to George.

"You will leave here immediately, and never return."

M. de Saint-Juirs, having gotten possession of the *Nouvelliste de l'Allier,* read the following:

"There has been considerable talk in the city of a duel with swords which took place yesterday in the outskirts of Vichy between M. Albert T. and M. George de S. After a desperate fight, in which both adversaries gave proof of impetuous courage, M. de S. was quite seriously wounded in the right hand. We hope that he will recover soon so as not to retard his approaching marriage."

The words fell upon the most profound silence. When M. de Saint-Juirs had finished, consternation showed on every face. M. de Saint-Juirs let his arms fall to his sides and looked at George, who lowered his eyes, and tears rolled silently down Marcelle's cheeks.

Aunt Hérisson directed at each one her angry eyes. "Do you deny it, Monsieur?" she said at last.

"No, Madame."

"Then I have told you what you are to do."

Marcelle began to sob.

"You, Marcelle, go to your room."

"You cannot mean this, Madame," said George in a voice choked by tears. "You cannot mean it."

"Go!"

Marcelle went slowly toward her fiancé, and with quiet courage said to him in a weak but clear voice:

"George, I must say adieu to you. I love you, and I will never love anyone but you. Kiss me."

The aunt started, but stood still, overcome at such audacity. This "murderer" was embracing her niece before her very eyes! Marcelle threw a last look at her fiancé and was already touching the button of the door when a great noise stopped her.

"*Tonnerre de Brest!*"

It is M. de Saint-Juirs who, swearing thus, had just banged the table with his fist, and made all the glassware tinkle.

"Stay here, Marcelle," he commanded.

The aunt drew herself up before her brother-in-law, and as she was forced to throw back her head to see through her glasses, it gave her the aggressive and rather ridiculous appearance of a little old white rooster. "I swear," she said solemnly—"I swear that this man shall not marry my niece."

"And I beg of you to remember that I am master here, not you."

"If he does not leave," said the aunt, "I will."

"My dear George," said the old gentleman, "go; do not weep, and return tomorrow. From now on, I will handle this affair."

When George, a little less downcast, had gone, the scene recommenced. M. de Saint-Juirs made known very clearly his intention. It was the first time that Marcelle had ever heard him raise his voice before her aunt. He defended George to the utmost.

Aunt Hérisson, among other little faults, had one great one—obstinacy. When she had got something in her head there was no use trying to dissuade her. M. de Saint-Juirs was not unaware of this, and he said:

"Well, then, you will not stay here."

"So be it."

But it was now Marcelle who spoke. "Yes, Aunt, you will remain. I will not marry against your will. You have taken the place of my mother, and your kindness to me has given you the rights of a mother. I will never cease to love George, but I will not disobey you, and I will marry him only when you permit it."

"That is outrageous—what you are saying!" said M. de Saint-Juirs.

"No, Father, I am doing my duty." And the young girl, overcome by this effort, went up to her room, where she wept for a long time.

* * *

Little by little Marcelle lost her color. It was now two months since George had left for Paris. She had heard nothing of him, and was too proud to inquire. She tried sometimes to smile; to act as though nothing had happened, but her smile was more pitiful and more heartrending than her sadness. Aunt Hérisson said nothing. She was gentler and more religious than ever, and frequently went out to the little church to see the good old curé, with whom she had endless conversations.

Marcelle drooped more and more. One day when she believed herself alone in her room, she was weeping softly. Feeling that someone was watching her, she raised her head. Aunt Hérisson stood near her, very erect, and Marcelle had the impression that her eyes were wet; but her aunt went out without saying a word.

One morning, coming into her own little *salon,* where she passed alone all her mornings, Marcelle was not a little surprised to see on the table plainly in sight a letter addressed to her without stamp or postmark.

It was a letter from George. It commenced thus:

"My Dear Fiancée:

"How happy I am! What made me so miserable was to be without news of

you. Judge my surprise and my joy when I received this morning in an unknown hand this little note: 'If M. George de Sernay wishes to correspond with his cousin Marcelle, he may write to her once each month in care of M. Barbon, notary at Vichy.' I have profited by that, my dear sweetheart, to tell you how much I—"

When his daughter appeared at lunch, M. de Saint-Juirs remarked how well she looked, and in the afternoon he could be heard singing while placing his electric wires. Aunt Hérisson herself did not appear to have noticed the change which had come over her niece, and as it was the evening before All Saints' Day she went out early to go to confession.

Marcelle went back to her room and read again the precious letter from her fiancée. During all that week she wondered who could have brought it, and suspected her father of having procured her this pleasure. Then the idea came to her to write to George in reply. She wrote him at length, put her letter in an envelope, which she had the delicacy not to seal, and placed it at noon on the table in the little blue *salon* in the same place where she had found the letter from her friend. She announced then to her father, not without insistence, that she was going out in the afternoon. M. de Saint-Juirs said "All right" with a detached air.

In the evening she ran to the little blue *salon;* the letter was not there. One month to the day after the arrival of the first letter, she found another on the table. She was overjoyed at this, but still more surprised, and for this reason: She had become convinced now that the mysterious messenger was no other than her father. But M. de Saint-Juirs had been at Orleans for eight days, and would not return until the following week!

Marcelle resolved to clear up this mystery at whatever cost. The unknown messenger arrived at night on a fixed date each month—the seventeenth. She waited this time with more impatience than ever, and when the seventeenth arrived, in the evening she rolled her bolster in her bed to make it appear that she was asleep there and went and hid herself in the little blue *salon* behind the curtains.

The most profound silence reigned all over the château. Marcelle's heart beat fast, for she was a little frightened. Finally she heard a slight noise near her. The floor was creaking. Someone was coming. Someone was going into her room, and she congratulated herself on the precaution she had taken. Then a ray of light showed under the door of the blue *salon,* which was opened and softly admitted the unknown messenger, bearing a letter. Marcelle at last saw her face. She could hardly keep from crying out.

This unknown messenger was Aunt Hérisson herself!

* * *

Toward the fifteenth of the following month, it could be seen that strange preparations were being made in the château of Saint-Juirs without the knowledge of Mlle. Hérisson, and there were secret consultations between father and daughter which ceased suddenly as soon as they caught sight of the aunt. On the evening of the seventeenth, when everyone was in bed, a passer-by might have observed M. de Saint-Juirs mysteriously admitting a stranger into the château. At eleven o'clock, Aunt Hérisson, George's monthly letter in her hand, entered the little blue *salon* with her usual precautions.

Ah, poor Aunt Hérisson, what trick have they played you? Hardly have you entered when suddenly ten electric lamps throw into the room a startling illumination, and you see with amazement in the seats along the wall M. de Saint-Juirs, who laughs fit to shake the château, and George de Sernay himself, a little embarrassed, and Marcelle, who doesn't know whether to laugh or cry!

THE PURSUIT OF THE UNBELOVED

By Charles Vale

I HAD often been annoyed by his almost superhuman wisdom, and when he began to talk about women I naturally recollected an engagement that required my immediate absence. But he restrained me with an epigram—I have always been peculiarly susceptible to epigrams.

"Men," he said sententiously, "who go out after eleven o'clock at night should remember that women sometimes go out after men."

I turned round, of course, and so lost my only chance of escape.

"What has that to do with your story?" I asked.

"Nothing whatever," he replied placidly. "But it secures me my audience. Listen."

If there is one thing I hate more than the other things I hate, it is the word "listen." I have heard it over the telephone so frequently that it has never lost its pristine offensiveness.

"I will not," I said firmly. "I am a free and independent citizen; I stick like a mollusc to the Constitution; I detest taxation without representation—except for women; and I believe implicitly in the right of a majority, however stupid, to tyrannize over a minority, however intelligent. But you are not a majority, and I refuse to be coerced. I am a progressive, and the main principle of a progressive is to move on."

I moved. But I knew perfectly well that progress was useless. That detestable epigram drew me back, inexorably.

"Listen!" I said—I believe in returning superfluous contributions promptly. "Was that your own, or did you find it?"

"I borrowed it from Shaw," he answered, simply. "Not from one of his published works, but from one that will be published after he sees this." And without warning, he asked me if I had read "The Philanderer."

I confessed, and apologized.

He nodded. "I have my own trouble," he said. "Blonde, with blue eyes—sapphires in pale wax, don't you know. I detest blondes. And I loathe blue eyes. Brown for mine, always. That luscious, velvety kind, you know."

He sat down.

I sat down.

"The luscious, velvety kind," he repeated. "The kind that belongs to the true philanderer. You are no doubt aware," he added, "that the word 'philanderer' does not mean what it is usually supposed to mean."

I wasn't; but I said I would be content with supposing that it usually meant what it meant.

"It means," he said, "one who loves men—or, to be singular, man. It means, primarily and peculiarly, a female of the human species. Listen.

"I have always understood women remarkably well. I do not care to boast about a trivial accomplishment, but it is necessary that you should know the truth. A woman is an open book to me. I read her at a glance—though sometimes, when I am interested, I take several glances. I am especially fond of the inscrutable, sphinxlike woman. She is particularly easy to read—written in words of one syllable, so to speak.

"I am not proud of this ability to understand women. It is merely one of the unconsidered trifles that complete the equipment of a properly bal-

anced man—put the chimney on the roof, so to speak. I have been able to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest the feminine character almost as long as I can remember, so you will see that this is not a matter of arrogance but simply of fact. I wish to impress that upon you very strongly. Listen.

"This gift—if I may so call it—has occasionally embarrassed me. It has placed me in the awkward position of receiving unsolicited confidences, of sharing secrets that would turn the chill of a September morning into a July heat wave. It is, indeed, a gift that has disadvantages. To gaze into the well-like eyes of a brunette, and discover truth at the bottom, may be very charming in theory, but it is sometimes troublesome in practise. For truth, as you have heard, is often stranger than fiction, though less popular and profitable. There have been times when I have realized that it is a good thing women do not understand themselves, or they would be frequently and severely shocked. There is only one thing, I think, worse than being a woman and that is, being near one.

"I may as well admit it at once: I am a woman hater. With the exception of an occasional brunette, I detest the whole species. They are shallow, silly, insincere and expensive. They are also several other things, none of them pleasant. I hope you will not misunderstand me. I am not in the least prejudiced. I am merely stating the results of observation, reinforced with concrete intelligence. I do not believe in the abstract. I have no use for Bergson, or anything that he has ever written or may write. Intuition is a vain invention. The only solid basis for a happy life is intellect, untrammelled by matrimonial entanglements. Other people think and theorize. I don't think. I know. Listen.

"At the earliest age compatible with ratiocination"—with a frigid glance, he left me frozen in the middle of an involuntary wriggle—"I realized that happiness depends upon personal freedom, and that personal freedom depends upon immunity from marriage. Very soon, I hope, we shall be able to vaccinate our young men so that they may escape from the chronic epidemic of marriage. Calf lymph for calf love—I will not stretch the analogy, but it is suggestive. In the meantime, we must depend upon reason. We must cultivate intelligence. Very intensive cultivation may sometimes be necessary, but we can learn a good deal from Roosevelt, in the way of what to avoid, and I have faith in the methods of the fellow, if they are firmly disregarded.

"There is obviously no freedom for those who are tied in the bonds of matrimony, and no rest for the weary unless they can afford ample alimony. I have, therefore, trained myself to be independent, to be always and everywhere sufficient unto myself. Self-sufficiency is my strongest point. Of all the women I have seen, read, analyzed and tabulated, not one has made the slightest impression upon my intellect, which is impermeable. I have watched them, weighed them and found them wanting in all but the stupidities inseparable from femininity. It has merely amused me to study their little tricks and devices, the transparency of the veil with which they pretend to shield their emotions, and the colossal egotism which they constantly exhibit. From sweet sixteen to acidulated thirty-six, they reveal the same symptoms of annoying assurance and the same unreasoning determination to deprive man of his inalienable freedom and transform him into the father of a family.

"I do not wish to be transformed. I am entirely satisfied with myself as I am at present. I do not yearn to buy imported gowns and hats for any woman, and I like to smoke strong tobacco and violent cigars whenever and wherever I please in my own house. In other words, I am an individualist. I have leisure to live, and something to live for. I can go to bed when I like and get up when I like—provided I catch the 8.17 A. M. train. No dulcet voice floats down the stairs at midnight,

reminding me that the fleeting hours have fleeted. No hairpins are scattered on my bedroom rug, and I can use anything in my bathroom in the dark without taking bichloride of mercury tabloids in mistake for somebody's candy cough cure. In brief, I am happy. No woman has systematically reduced the order of my house to chaos and opened charge accounts at all the leading stores. I never dread the marked-up sales, or the forty-dollar gowns bargained off for seventy-nine ninety-eight. I am free and unfrenzied, simple but sophisticated; and I can play golf without topping my drive because of the depressing effect of lingerie bills.

"Imagine, therefore, my amusement when I met Miss B.—I will call her B. for blonde. I do not wish you to be under any misapprehensions. She is entirely charming—that is, as charming as anyone with the double handicap of blondeness and femaleness can possibly be. She can talk both intelligently and interestingly during those occasional lapses into lucidity which few women can wholly avoid. She is not a shrieking militant, or a puttified believer in the eternally abject status of women. She does not return thanks with humility for all the kicks that civilization can conveniently spare, but she does not yearn to climb the Metropolitan Tower and put the hands of the clock forward precisely twenty-four hours. She wears sensible dresses and shoes that are not all heel. She can walk five miles before breakfast and dance fifteen after dinner. She can smoke a cigarette without looking outrageously virtuous, play ragtime or Bach's fugues with simple, contagious merriment, swim, cycle, skate, cook and sew. She does not like mice or adore mutilated mahogany furniture; she is devoted to babies, books and broiled lobsters; she believes in eugenics for the aged, honeymoons for the young and comfortable incomes for all who know how to use them. And her favorite study in anatomy is backbone.

"You will see that nature has compensated her in some degree for being a woman, but the original flaw can never be eradicated. Miss B., admirable in so many superficial ways, is none the less a woman at heart. For instance, she believes firmly in her intuition. While, with my usual intense rationality, I was analyzing and classifying her character, she was foolish enough to remark that if men only understood women as women understand men, there would be much less egotism in the world. And this to me! I smiled—not superciliously, but with the gentle amusement of the man who knows.

"'My dear Miss B.,' I said, 'why do women persevere, year after year, in this amusing illusion of feminine subtlety? Why do they not become more manly, and admit the truth occasionally? Why do they perpetuate this gulf between the sexes—a gulf into which so many wrecked homes and beautiful dreams have been flung? You may not quite understand what I mean. Let me give you a simple example. If I see a cow lying down in a field, and, after careful investigation, realize that it is standing up, I bring my intellect to bear upon the situation. I study the cow and the posture of the cow, and arrive at a conclusion in exact consonance with observed conditions. But what does a woman do? She does not even look at the cow. She looks into the recesses of her consciousness, where her intuition is supposed to be enthroned, and she announces, probably, that this cow is not a cow at all, but an Irish bull. Now, why this perversity?'

"She looked at me. I could see that she was slightly perplexed. She was wondering if I was entirely serious. She was also wondering whether I knew that the illustration was not entirely original. To show her how easily I could read a woman's thoughts, I told her exactly of what she was thinking.

"'You see all that?' she asked.

"I said so.

"'And that is all you see?'

"It was.

"I think she must have been bewildered at my insight. Wishing to spare

her, I allowed myself to become flippant.

"'I will give you another example,' I said. 'It has always been an axiom, with women, that any woman can twist any man round her little finger, if she desires to indulge in such acrobatic amusements. It is assumed that a determined woman can marry any man who has been unhappy enough to produce that state of determination in her. She has an armory of feminine weapons and devices, all feeble, all obvious and all inevitably fatal. It does not matter in the slightest, we are told, whether the man perceives her purpose —as, of course, he would do instantly. If she is determined to annex him, he may consider himself annexed. That is the legend. But what is the reality? Is any man ever inveigled into matrimony by such infantile methods, unless he himself has planned and desired that suicidal dénouement? Of course not. The woman can play her game only when the man is game enough to play with her, and to conceal his complete knowledge of the comic aspects of the situation.'

"'That is your real opinion?' she asked; and, don't you know, I rather liked the look in her eyes. After all, it isn't her fault that they are blue. We all have to bear our crosses.

"I told her that I had expressed my sentiments with perfect clarity.

"She seemed to be thinking—if one can seriously attribute such an occupation to the female sex. Her blue eyes (I rather like blue eyes after all) had a reverie-ish look that attracted me. Upon my word, I don't know that brown can put anything over on blue, as a mere matter of color. Of course circumstances alter cases, and I still consider a brunette an important and agreeable circumstance.

"'It wouldn't be a bad game,' she said, 'if both of the players thoroughly understood that it was just a game and nothing else. Don't you think so?'

"I said that I did.

"I must admit that she was a genuine little sport. She started right in with the game and batted out a home run before I quite realized that 'play ball' had been called. As a rule, I am not so slow that you would notice it as you passed me in the Twentieth Century Limited, but it took me a moment to get into my stride. Afterward, of course, it was simply a vaudeville act, with one performer and one spectator. Possibly there was a little difference of opinion as to who was which, but disagreement is an essential ingredient of friendship—makes it gummy and adhesive, so to speak.

"We played that game, with intervals for refreshments and recreation, for about a month. All my previous impressions of the primitive sex were confirmed and intensified. I have never in my life seen anything so distressingly obvious as the carefully concealed subtlety of Miss B. It was so easy to see through her deepest profundities that I was incessantly reminded of the gauzy, lacyish lingerie advertised in the leading feminine appeal weeklies. If I had not known that the whole thing was a game, I should have been pained by the confiding way in which she would stumble upon a pavement that had not been iced for a fortnight, and require the support of an embracing arm. Her delicate concessions to my personal foibles reeked to high heaven. She knows that I am a resolute smoker—in other words, that I own several pipes and am rarely seduced into buying the so-called cigars that pollute our leading hotels and local drug stores. You should have heard her allusions to Richmond, Virginia. The aroma of that Mecca of nicotine devotées was injected gently into the morning air, with casual references to the happiness of a truly domestic woman who was fortunate enough to possess an inveterate and excessive smoker as a husband. My political views, it appeared, were both sound and inspiring; indeed, I had never suspected their peculiar nobility until Miss B. drew my attention to their enlightening and regenerative power. I could see also that she had noticed my fondness for athletics, and

was deeply moved by this sign of sanity. It became increasingly clear to me that my conversation was a happy and rare blend of common sense and scintillating brilliancy, that my favorite books had been selected with extraordinary insight, and that my preference for musical comedy instead of grand opera showed admirable sensibility and a characteristic lack of affectation.

"You will see that I had, in Miss B., a human mirror which revealed all my admirable qualities without any of the painful distortion conveyed by the glasses that some too frank friends hold out to us. The sensation of perfection was soothing to me, I will admit; to see oneself as others see us acquired a new and pleasant significance. But, of course, I had not lost my sense of humor. I knew that Miss B. was merely playing her game with feminine ingenuity and insincerity, and it pained me to think what her feelings would have been if she had realized how completely I understood every move in the game, and how shallow and trivial and obvious it all was. Immemorial femininity: just that, and nothing more. Transparency raised to the *n*th power. Such is the boasted subtlety of women!"

He sighed, and rose.

I rose.

"I wonder," he said, "if you would mind—that is to say, I wish—in fact, we both desire very much that you would—"

"Some other time," I said hastily. "Nothing would give me greater pleasure, but unfortunately I am very much pressed at present—"

"We cannot take any refusal," he said—but dispiritedly, I thought. "At least, *she* cannot. She has set her heart on your being my best man—"

I turned and faced him. He lowered his eyes.

"You don't mean—"

He nodded, guiltily.

"On the fifteenth," he said. "You'll see me through, won't you?"

"But it is impossible!" I said. "Incredible! I refuse to believe it!"

"You can believe anything where women are concerned," he said. Already the burdens of the future weighed heavily upon him.

THANKS—An ejaculation to be uttered by the American people on that day foretold by the prophet of Wix when four angels standing at the four ends of the earth shall forbid the four winds of heaven any further entry into the lungs of Bryan and Roosevelt.

PIERROT AND THE PRIMROSE

By Dorothy Paul

I GIVE you his name, just as you might have read it yourself, from the program of a certain dingy little theater that we remember, you and I, in the Rue Clichy. Thereby do I violate no confidence. For while one's given name is a private, and often delicate, matter between one's god-parents and one's self, one's nom de guerre all may read, if one is so fortunate that all should care to.

Now, gradually had it come about, as things come, with much waiting and more toiling, that the name of this same Pierrot had begun to be read by the habitues of the "Variété Théatre," with that rubbing of hands and moistening of lips with which one greets one's favorite dish at dejeuner. You know how it is with them, these people—how they must laugh and forget—and how they will pay the franc willingly for but one thing, and that the filling of an emptiness, whether it be of the heart or of the appetite; so there is, at the end of it all, much in common between the jester and restaurateur.

He had laughed for them, had Pierrot, and now it began to be that they laughed *with* him—and that is well, for there is an emptiness of one's own that one must fill, even when one jests—if they laugh little, one must, perforce, fill it frugally, but when they laugh more, and one may, now and then, cheer one's dejeuner with a sip of vin rouge—ah, then that is better!

But as for the wide, good smile of Pierrot, it came off with the rest of the grease-paint—for it had so happened, as it does, not seldom, that the steps of this Pierrot, in and out of the motley, had never lain along the Primrose Way, wistfully though he had sought it. They're a native growth, you know, those primroses, and lend themselves not kindly to the transplanting, and the soil of his little garden, all strangely enough—for I believe it was a good little garden—seemed quite hopeless for the growing of them.

But when it is in one's heart—deep in one's heart—to find primroses, one finds them. And the finding of Pierrot's had come about in this way:

The winter was over, the gay Paris winter, with its streets a-whirl with crowds and traffic, and the hum and hurry and glitter of the holiday season was melting a bit in the gray spring rains. One walked with more of lingering down the Champs Elysées these days, because the good smell of new, wet leaves woke something in one's heart that had been asleep; and, when the little flower-girls along the boulevards offered their rain-wet violets, one stopped and bought—because of that Something that was awake.

Now that was how it came about that Pierrot was late for rehearsal on that good spring morning. When he had turned the corner at the Madeleine and swung toward the waiting omnibus, between the timidly budding rows of trees that skirt the square, there in her old place, close against the sheltering wall, was Margot—Margot of the Flowers—with her flat brown basket heaped with violets, wound in the stiff little boutonniéres for which one pays ten centimes. There were times when Pierrot had paid it just to see the wistful gladness in the little white face of her and to hear the quick "Merci, M'sieu'" as the bit of silver touched

her fingers. But today it was not because of Margot that he paid his omnibus fare for the violets and walked to rehearsal down the narrow, rain-wet street—it was because of that Something that was awake—and hungry.

It was a place that was not cheering to enter in the morning hours, that little theater in the Rue Clichy. Empty of its fluttering, applauding crowds, and with its stage so bare and dusty, one came with a feeling of desolateness from the sunlight of the street.

Pierrot shivered a bit because of the dampness, as he stood in the wings and waited his turn. The footlights made a garish gash of brightness across the gray gloom, with the echoing emptiness on one side of it and on the other the little groups of players—talking, smoking, scowling at yellow score-sheets, humming, laughing together, with the easy cameraderie of those who have a work in common; down in the orchestra a ceaseless tuning of strings, and across the buzz, the familiar impatience of the manager's voice, giving fragmentary directions, while he made vicious alterations in the sheet music with a stub of blue pencil.

He looked up, as Pierrot came in, and frowned—it was late, very—then he took off his coat, pushed back his hat and beckoned to someone in the wings. A slim little slip of a girl dressed as a Pierrette pirouetted down to the footlights, pinning a little black peak of a cap to her powdered hair as she came. The group of players moved into the circle of light. It was diverting, this, to see the trial performance of a new player, and such a child, the little one! And from the wings, Pierrot, looking, forgot the frown—for when it is spring and one is young—young enough, still, in spite of It All, to buy violets—what would you?

M'sieur the Manager pushed the hat still farther back and chewed the stub of blue pencil; he lifted his eyes, slowly, the full length of her, as she came down into the light—the slim little ankles, the little round waist so slender, the tilted white point of a chin, and the black eyes that dared one. Then he smiled—a slow, twisted smile it was, and not pleasing. "Well, then," he said; "you can do what—dance?—sing?"

The white teeth of the little Pierrette gleamed for an instant between the full, painted lips; the bare shoulders lifted and fell in the tiniest of shrugs: "Ah, but yes—M'sieur should judge." She flung a laugh and a nod of readiness to the musicians, and caught up the full skirt.

Chewing the blue pencil, M'sieur the Manager watched her with narrowed eyes—watched the slim, light feet and the slim, quick hands of the little Pierrette as she danced—had her sing again and again her light, naughty little songs, and laugh again and again her light, daring little trills, while he sipped and appraised and considered. And as she danced, *she* watched *him* with chin daintily a-tilt, and wide black eyes that saw much.

And then, while he hesitated—for it is serious and grows harder each day, this thing of making it laugh, the great public, and one must choose carefully those who know how—while he hesitated, she tripped into the wings and was back in the space of a breath, holding out the little black peak of a cap and singing a begging song—a Bohemian snatch of a thing—straight into his eyes, with a little three-cornered smile that was a witchery of wistfulness. Prettily done it was, and it tipped the scale. M'sieur the Manager took the pencil from between his teeth, wrote his name heavily across the contract blank, tossed it with a laugh into the outheld cap as she flashed past him—and the thing was done!

And, laughing back over her shoulder as she went, she carried, all unknowing, yet another bit of almsgiving that had been tossed into the little black cap—and it was the quick-flung heart of Pierrot, that thing she carried!

Do I need to tell you, then, how it came about?—when one finds a primrose where one has sought long and found none, one transplants it, and that

quickly, if the good God help him.

At the first Pierrot would but stand in the wings and watch her each night as she danced, with eyes that all might read. It was Jacques, the friend of Pierrot, who read them first—Jacques who had many more of years than Pierrot and who had gathered in them much of discretion besides the many wrinkles of kindliness that lay upon his face like a guide-map to the good heart of him.

Pierrette had pirouetted back into the wings, blown on a little gust of applause, and Jacques, watching, had seen the so hungry eyes of Pierrot, with the soul in them kneeling, follow each light step of her, and the so hungry fingers of Pierrot close for the space of a thought on a back-blown fold of her dress—close reverently, as one might touch the hem of a king's robe for healing.

Jacques had put his hand on the shoulder of Pierrot, and the *touch* had said, "That of youth that is in my heart calls across the years to you!" But with his lips it was only, "Eh, my boy, my boy—is it so bad as that—*so bad as that?*"

And when the eyes of Pierrot had looked up to him above the leer of the painted smile, he had *known*. And it was because he knew that he had slipped his arm through the arm of Pierrot and turned him about with a rough kindliness that he might not see M'sieur the Manager lift the point of Pierrette's chin on his great finger to kiss the red lips of her.

As for Pierrette, when it began to be that she herself read aright the eyes of Pierrot, she only tilted that white chin the more impishly and laughed at him and lured him—but answered him? —never! For the soul of little Pierrette it was a trifling thing—though that were well, perhaps, at the end, for the heart of this Pierrot had starved and grown small in the starving, and so it asked little—voila!

But it was good, that heart of Pierrot, and one wished that it might ask more. For when one asks diligently, one must, in the end, receive—which may not be always, of itself, well.

Now it may have been because of the diligence of the asking, and, again, it may have been much else—perhaps she did but divert herself, and, perhaps again, M'sieur the Manager did too much divert *himself*—but however it was, it came about, as things come, which is at last, that she took her little red heel from the long-suffering heart of Pierrot and poured over it the balm of her favor.

And, so, even before the season of violets had spent itself quite, it came to be known in the green-room of the "Variété" that Pierrot and Pierrette were fiancés.

One may live long and with much of sadness, but if at the end one is happy, he has done well and paid but a sou. It was so with Pierrot. The years that had gone before and were dark were bright now, with a brightness that streamed back over them, as through an open door, from the great Today. For the laugh of the little Pierrette it was music, and the warm touch of her hand on his arm was a thing that was good—and because of them the wide world was all music—and good! Yet it was not, for one moment, Pierrette to whom the heart of this Pierrot was kneeling—no more than *your* heart kneels to the *image* of Our Lady when you pray. Just so—Pierrette was an image—and the heart of Pierrot prayed. It is often so, and, believe me, it is well.

Gradually and a bit stumblingly, as one walks from darkness into light, did Pierrot come to believe in his good fortune; gradually did he steady his voice when he spoke her name and his fingers when they touched hers.

And all of the while did she laugh, the little Pierrette, never a long moment serious—daring, alluring, uncertain, fluttering ever just before him, like a marsh-light—and Pierrot, following, thought it a beacon that led on to the Land Where Dreams Come True.

And then there came M'sieur Arcis.

It was one night at the Café Pari-

sienne—on the Rue Rivoli it is, you will perhaps remember—they were for a bit of supper, Pierrot and the little one. It was her birthday, and they celebrated, casting frugality to the winds.

With that point of a chin on locked fingers she looked at him across the little table.

"I shall not so much mind that I have another year, mon Pierrot," she had said; "since with it there is—you!"

It was the first word of hers that he could wear next to his heart for an amulet. He stretched his hand to her across the cloth—palm up, like the beggars along the boulevards—and in his eyes was that pleading that passes the pleading of lips.

Very slowly she began to unlace the little pink-stained fingers for the alms-g i v i n g—distractingly slowly, a n d laughing, a l w a y s l a u g h i n g, she stretched them towards him.

Then it was that M'sieur Arcis came into the Café Parisienne.

A gust of cold air from the street entered with him, and he came, with a cigar half smoked between his fingers and humming a gay little snatch of a song, past the table where they sat.

As he passed, Pierrette, nonchalantly and with lashes that drooped daringly, and little red mouth a-pout, took up his song at the very bar, and hummed it after him.

Half way past he turned; then he came back to the table with both hands out to Pierrette.

"But non," he said; "it cannot *be!*"

And, "I knew you would come back!" said Pierrette—and you would have said there were two meanings to the words had you heard them; which, after all, is neither here nor there.

Then she touched the chair next to hers with the tips of her little fingers. "You shall sit here," said Pierrette; "so—by me!"

And it came about that M'sieur Arcis made one of them over the little supper, with its mushroom sauces and its vin rouge.

And with the wine Pierrette laughed much, and without discrimination, into the eyes of M'sieur Arcis and of Pierrot, so that the eyes of Pierrot did not laugh back, as did those of M'sieur—wherefore did Pierrette laugh more into the eyes of M'sieur, to the end that M'sieur, in acknowledgment, lifted his glass to her, and, having drunk, broke it; also, at the time of the bon soirs, did he lift her hand to his lips, most slowly and possessingly—and, wherefore, at the end of it all, did Pierrot walk home with her quite in silence, and parted by breaking that silence with too much, perhaps, of impetuousness. And so it was that a great gulf was fixed, as you would say, between Pierrot and Pierrette—which was M'sieur Arcis.

But, then, as we agree, they are a native growth, those primroses, and not so simple of transplanting.

Be that as it may, it began to be that it was M'sieur Arcis who would wait for Pierrette at the stage door of the "Variété" and M'sieur Arcis to whom she would look across the little table at the Café Parisienne. For the soul of the little Pierrette, it was a trifling thing; also the purse of M'sieur had more of weight than the purse of Pierrot—so!

Need I tell you, then, the rest? How Pierrot came one morning for rehearsal, into the little theater in the Rue Clichy, with eyes that sleep had not visited and that hungered for the little Pierrette. He had thought long and much within himself that night, and when his pride had told him that she had wronged him, his heart had said that it is but once we live, and for a little while only. It is a strong thing and dies not easily, the pride of a man, but in the heart and on the lips of Pierrot, as he stood in the wings that morning, there was nothing but love for the little one—and a longing that held out its arms to her!

He stood where he could watch the stage door at each opening, that he might be the first to see her. Each time the heavy green door swung back

his eyes would light with an eagerness that was akin to suffering, and each time the cold, sleety air blew in a stamping, hurrying, heavy-coated figure, the light would die out, as though the draught had quenched it.

Rehearsal wore on. M'sieur the Manager jerked out his watch at shortening intervals, and glanced often at the stage door; the edge of his voice was frayed with irritation; he chewed the blue pencil with a vindictive relish, and his displeasure was an unholy thing. But, for all of that, there came no Pierrette through the green door.

And so, when it was over, that long morning, Pierrot had gone down the narrow, cheerless street that takes you to Montmartre, that he might ask for the little Pierrete.

It was not an engaging place, that house in Montmartre. There was that in the air with which it elbowed its way to the edge of the sidewalk between crowding neighbors, that suggested it was stifling and thrusting out its lank, grimy dormer windows to breathe.

The door was ajar—not hospitably, but because it was latchless—and Pierrot opened it creakingly and went in. Down the straight, uncarpeted flight of stairs, Madame the Landlady, also creakingly, was making her ponderous way, wiping suddy hands on a soiled blue apron. Her black hair was drawn back with an unpleasant tension from a forehead that shone and was red.

"Bon jour—?" she said, above the creaking of the steps. Her voice did not please one, and she made of the greeting a question that held somewhat of suspicion.

While Pierrot stumbled through his inquiry her eyes roved about over him with that appraising glance that one feels is making notes.

Then, with arms akimbo, she shed her laconicness like a garment.

"Who? Mademoiselle? The Mademoiselle who sang bad songs at the 'Variété' and who went away—two—three—days ago with one M'sieu' Arcis?—and paid not one sou—mon Dieu, not one sou!—and me a mother to her—au Diable avec Mademoiselle la Pierrette!"

A streak of sunlight came in at the curtainless window and fell across the sordid disorder of the hallway, with its torn red carpet and its so greasy walls, and across the not charming face of Madame.

It had been just so—a streak of sunlight had come and lighted the sordidness of it all for Pierrot, and now it was gone, and it would be dark again. But it was not a lovely way to learn it.

Pierrot turned and went out again, through the door that creaked, and walked down the narrow street, shrinking from the taunt of the sunlight.

At the corner Jacques joined him—eh, he was a friend, was Jacques!—and they walked home quite in silence—for there is that in friendship—it has not always need of the words; but in the clasp of Jacques's fingers there was a comfort—after its kind!

Over the little ripple in the big pool, the surface closed again, quite placidly.

You know how it is—it must laugh and forget, that great public—and since it also pays, it comes about that the Pierrots put on their smiles of grease-paint and laugh—with their lips—and balance their peacock feathers and juggle their red and green balls, and under it all—but what matter!

At the "Variété" there was another Pierrette who sang—a Pierrette of wood, who opened her so foolish red mouth too wide, and could not smile with the eyes. The naughty songs that had been piquant mouthfuls on the delicious lips of the little Pierrette were, when she sang them—ugh!—faisandé!

In the heart of Pierrot, as he balanced the foolish feathers and juggled the foolish balls, as he walked to rehearsal arm in arm with Jacques, as he drank his vin rouge of an evening at the little green tables along the sidewalk of the Rue St. Germain—even as he knelt at night to Our Lady—there were, in the heart of Pierrot, two things that struggled—a prayer that his eyes might never again look upon the little

Pierrette, who had amused herself with so much of cruelty, and a longing—that longing that held out its arms to her!

It was at last the final night of Pierrot's engagement at the "Variété." He was dining alone, and frugally, at a tiny café in Montmartre, one of those little places that one finds unexpectedly in out-of-the-way corners of Paris, with its trellis of green vines before the door to screen the tables along the sidewalk, its sanded floor and the linen that surprises one with its whiteness. The air was heavy with the fumes of smoke and of wine, but there were mushrooms in the sauces and the wine itself was not bad, were one not too much of a connoisseur.

There were two men at the next table to Pierrot's who talked much and with little discretion, because of this same vin rouge. They wore loose blue blouses, and ate cheese with great gray slabs of bread, which they sliced slantwise from the loaf with their knives, as one sharpens a pencil. As their tongues warmed with the wine they talked loudly, and Pierrot heard much of it.

It was of a woman they spoke. They said things upon which they congratulated each other, with sly winks, on their wit and with laughter that was not pleasant. It used to be that she sang, they said, at a theater in the Rue Clichy, and that at the last she had gone away, with some secretness and a boutonnièré-red m'sieur of the name of Arcis. And now—well, now she sang at street corners, holding out to those who listened a tambourine, which was, for the most part, empty.

Outside the little café it rained, a gray, comfortless night rain that threw the glare of the street lights in yellow smears on the wet pavements.

Through it, oblivious, walked Pierrot, while the rain dripped from the down-turned brim of his hat, and the rubber-coated cabbies drawing their slipping horses up to the curb, turned to tap their foreheads and chuckle at the man who carried a closed umbrella down the wet length of the Rue Clichy, and turned in, dripping and deliberate, at the stage entrance of the "Variété."

In his dressing-room Pierrot turned up the light above the make-up table and painted upon his own the face of the One Who Laughed, with a hand to which the task was a habit. In the crooked bit of mirror above the table, the eyes of Pierrot met, through the painted mirth, the eyes of the One Who Laughed; a gust of merriment and applause came a-tip-toe through the green baize door and mocked him—then he turned out the light, with fingers that groped, and went down the steps into the wings.

In *her* dressing-room the Pierrette of Wood with the so foolish red mouth and the eyes that could not laugh, threw a rain-wet cloak into the corner and dipped a rabbit's foot into the rouge. Then the door opened and someone stood framed in the darkness of the doorway—a little hooded figure, with the rain running in peaks from her cloak, and eyes that were wide and breath that came quickly. She shut the door after her, moving with a pretty, bird-like swiftness; her wet hood slipped heavily to the floor as she moved into the full circle of light about the make-up table. It was the little Pierrette.

With an eagerness that held something almost of fear, she put out a hand that was not of the steadiest and caught the wrist of the Wooden One, while with the other she held out a tambourine in which were some silver coins.

"It is only this I can give you," she said, tossing a shower of franc pieces among the rouge-pots. "But listen to me—oh, you shall listen to me—you shall let me sing tonight in your place—and—and le bon Dieu will remember you!"

And so again it came about that before the eyes of Pierrot, watching from the wings, there danced out into the flood of light the little Pierrette—the little Pierrette, with feet of such light-

ness and eyes that laughed with the lips as they sang.

Twice did they call her back to sing for them, those people, and twice did she dance with those feet of such lightness and trill those songs so piquant—twice, and still they called.

A moment only she hesitated—a moment, while her eyes found Pierrot across the light. Then she came back, unpinning as she came the tiny black peak of a cap from her powdered hair and holding it out, not to the white faces that clamored and called from beyond the footlights, but to Pierrot—Pierrot with the face so drawn and so white and the smile of paint that mocked it. And singing, pleading, coaxing, straight into his eyes, she sang once again that Bohemian snatch of a begging song.

But what do you know of it—you who have not hungered? It may be that when one has starved long, one eats gladly of husks, and one's heart is warmed by the drinking of leas. It may be just that the love of a man dies not easily—and, again, it may be much else—you shall choose! But this I will tell you, and you may laugh if you will—that down the long rainbow that swung itself from the footlights to the wet eyes of Pierrot, laughing, singing, begging, danced the Little Pierrette—back into the empty heart of him.

THE DAUGHTER

By Orrick Johns

AND I will not have anything, not anything of thee,
Though all the days be longer than the long lines of the sea;
And I will lay no healing kiss upon the desert brow,
For I came forth from nothing and a little broken vow.

The sea all fain is of the sun, out from the ragged lands,
And though they part and shatter faith, the gray wind understands
The sun hath loved the sea too much, and loving is too sore
To make a little plaything of and leave it on the shore.

And I will have no ready kiss to heal the broken vow;
For all the winds forgot to sing a year and twenty now,
Forgot to sing of tidings of the love that had a day
And left a little plaything for the seat to take away.

THE chief virtue of a good husband is that his wife is easy to make love to.

WOMEN'S tears are the most precious things in the world. They always cost some man or other at least $2 apiece.

A WEDDING is a device for existing jealousy in women and terror in men.

AFTER HEARING TSCHAIKOWSKY

By Charles Hanson Towne

WHAT is the meaning of such beauty profound?
Ladders of utterance that lead the heart to heaven,
All senses driven
Up the high stairway to God's echoing halls,
Where angels ever keep Song's festivals.
Up, up, our souls are whirled—
Then back again to the old groaning world.
O rain of music suddenly that falls,
O thrilling storm of sound,
Now all our griefs are drowned
In the wild flood that flows
From the great heart of Melody where the Lord's trumpet blows!

Deeds we might do,
Imperishable deeds of excellence,
If we were drenched forever in such sound.
Here are Life's wounds immense
That we might help to heal—great wounds unbound,
And bleeding over the ground.
And the loud chords but break our hearts with pity,
And bid us bleed with anguish for the pain
That lives in every lane
In every thundering city.

Wars we might quell,
Lift beggars out of hell,
Flying back to God the souls to Him now lost,
If on these billows of beauty we might be tossed
In hours now level with ease
And pale with dalliance too.
We might be captains in a world forlorn,
Not cowards whose days are torn
With craven fear, if on such sounds as these
Our poor crushed spirits could climb back again
To mercy, and to goodness, and to men.

High dreams! . . . . And now the harmony is stilled . . .
What is it that within me has been killed? . . . .
If it should be all bitterness,
How I should bless
This ocean, this immortal sea of sound.
That healed me in its waves and tides profound!

CHARLES KLEIN AND OTHER GREAT THINKERS

By George Jean Nathan

MR. CHARLES KLEIN'S latest contribution to our national drama of thought bears the title "The Money Makers," and fires the bewildering revolutionary philosophy that wealth is acquired only by foul practise, that it brings with it awful misery and unhappiness, and that an economic desideratum beseeches its immediate return to the sources whence it has been illegally derived. This, the culmination of our native mental drama, *le grand climax*, the Krupp discharge. Hail, Charles, we salute thee! A staggering, spell-binding brain! Let us stand, brethren, and whistle the doxology.

It must be at once obvious, however, that so stupendous a coup of reasoning could be born only out of a slow and painfully plodding process of years of American theatrical thought. Great philosophies are not of instantaneous creation. A complete and careful survey of our drama of ideas, precursor of the present Klein masterpiece, reveals the following wonderful and ripening contributions on the part of our principal intellectual playwriting giants to the cyclopedia of worldly intelligence and information:

"The Witching Hour" (Thomas)—(1) Although a jury is locked securely in a court chamber, it may be influenced telepathically by what persons hundreds of miles away are at the moment thinking; and (2) A madman about to fire a revolver may be restrained in a twinkling by a mere hypnotic glance of the eye.

"The Harvest Moon" (Thomas)—(1) If you remind a young girl that her mother divorced her father and married another man it will cause the young girl in time to become a prostitute; (2) Different colors are suited to different emotional effects (see Herbert Spencer, 50 years before); and (3) Moonlight makes one feel sentimental.

"The Lion and the Mouse" (Klein)—The commercial mind, will and strategy of a great organizer of trusts may be completely and quickly changed and upset by the arguments of a young woman.

"The Servant In the House" (Kennedy)—(1) It is our duty to believe in the brotherhood of man; and (2) The socialism of the average socialist of today is merely "the fighting with his class against all the other classes."

"The Terrible Meek" (Kennedy)—Duty is one thing, mercy is another thing.

"The Next of Kin" (Klein)—A corrupt lawyer can gain control of every court in New York.

"The Dawn of a Tomorrow" (Burnett)—Mental suggestion is a sure cure for all human ills. (See also "The Witching Hour" and "Harvest Moon").

"As a Man Thinks" (Thomas)—(1) See "The Dawn of a Tomorrow"; (2) An estranged couple having a child is always reunited on Christmas eve by that child.

"Bought and Paid For" (Broadhurst)—(1) Poor girls who marry rich men have an awful time of it because (2) rich men drink heavily and proceed to enact big scenes from Brieux.

"Mere Man" (Thomas)—Woman is dependent upon man.

"The Model" (Thomas)—Art has a mental as well as a physical appeal.

"The Law of the Land" (Broadhurst)—If a man treats his adulterous wife harshly it is only simple justice that she shoot him dead on the spot.

"The City" (Fitch)—A large city corrupts a man.

"The Third Degree" (Klein)—The police often practise devious means to get a confession from a malefactor.

"The Return of Peter Grimm" (Belasco)—(1) A man who believes certain things during life is actually able to change his beliefs after death, and (2) project these new beliefs into the "subconscious memories" of living persons.

"The Case of Becky" (Locke)—(1) Absolute dual personality is a fact; and (2) a man may be hypnotized against his will (see also "The Witching Hour").

"The Lure" (Scarborough)—(1) The poor, fatherless girls of New York City are at the mercy of white slavers; and (2) it is the custom of bawdy houses that all male visitors be shown into the same room.

"A Man's World" (Crothers)—A woman who loves a man deeply will not marry him if she learns that he is not a virgin.

"The Great Divide" (Moody)—(1) When the old Puritan formalism of conscience and pragmatism come into conflict, there is a struggle; and (2) this struggle always has a comfortable termination.

"Ben Hur" (Wallace)—(1) A white spotlight may bring about a spiritual awakening; and (2) a chariot race is at once a spiritual spectacle and a powerful sermon.

There, in brief, is the grand sum total of the wisdom of the American drama to date! And there the profound womb out of which the current Klein nonesuch was given its being. As I have before observed, great philosophy is not a matter of a moment's birth.

This Klein is emblematic of the American drama at its worst. Specious and grotesquely absurd his reasoning, high-school composition-aired his manner of writing, antique his tactics of stage traffic, this Klein's serious contemplation and acceptance by the mob-theater is a picture at once pitiable and laughable. True, one cannot become angry with the fellow. No more so than one can become angry with an otherwise nice little boy misled and spoiled by the flattery of careless parents and relatives. One may only pat him on the head with good-natured tolerance and an understanding internal smile. Spectator of a Klein play, one is ever reminded of a child who has just learned for the first time that a comb run through the hair will pick up a piece of tissue paper and who, in jubilation, rushes breathless into the room where his parents are entertaining other adults and shouts out his great discovery.

I ask you seriously what say you of a playwriter of the position claimed for this Klein who, at this late day, still causes his women characters to "eat their hearts out" and his men characters to "drag" the truth from them; who grandiosely pronounces his decision to rid himself of the influence of Broadway by going abroad for a year in order that he may write a sound native drama, who goes abroad for a year and who then returns and quite as grandiosely produces a play not one-thousandth as good as a similarly themed play called "The Battle," written *on* Broadway by the comparatively unknown Mr. Cleveland Moffett and produced some six years before—a play, moreover, not greatly superior to another not widely dissimilar play called "Crœsus," the labor of the heavy-witted Baron Henri De Rothschild and presented with dire result two years ago in London?

From such omniscient doggerel, such low guying of common sense and of eligible dramatic literature, one turns with a deep intake of relief to Mr. Belasco's gentlemanly and thoroughly artistic presentation of Franz Molnar's

simple and engaging play, "Das Märchen vom Wolf," adapted by Mr. Leo Ditrichstein under the name of "The Phantom Rival." This, the play I brought to your attention some long time ago, the play which since then I have monthly been urging upon our local theatrical merchants. Back in the brain of every married woman, smiles Molnar, there sings the romance that might have been, there glows the picture of the man she might have taken for husband—and didn't. And as the days and years go on, the singing becomes more and yet more melodious and the picture more and yet more vivid and appealing. Although, grins Molnar, the man thus sentimentalized is in all probability an even more profound dub than the man the dreaming wench did marry. This tale the Budapest artist spins with a wealth of cunning, fancy and very excellent burlesque humor—as, for example, may be detected in the woman's meeting (in her staged imagination) with this lover of other days, during which meeting the dialogue is made up entirely of highly colored and platitudinous passages which the woman has been reading in cheap romantic novels. The adaptor has accomplished his task with winning grace, although one may be a trifle inclined to regret his deletion of the episode of the fable of the wolf (the rival) with which the husband lulls his little son to sleep at nights, the lad never remaining awake long enough to learn whether or not the wolf gets the lamb (the wife), until the last act. And, also, the rare ending of the original wherein, following the heroine's tremendously romantic dream, one hears her, in an adjoining room, carrying on the routine, prosaic daily conversation with the household's slovenly cook:

Vilma (referring to grocer's book): Twenty heller! What's that for?
Cook: Spinach.
Vilma: Sixteen?
Cook: Rice.
Vilma: Meat . . . 3 kronen 70, kraut . . .
Cook (monotonously repeating): Kraut . . .
Vilma: Kraut 40, cinnamon 8, pepper 14 . . .

And so on down the drab and anything but romantic list to eighteen heller worth of onions and the final curtain. Nevertheless, this the sort of play that puts to shame the cheap imaginings of our local play-butchers. See it!

But now again are we back in the Broadway playhouses and again observing the holding of the molasses up to nature. This time it is called "Daddy Longlegs," a stage show derived by Miss Jean Webster out of her fiction of similar title. Our old friends "Cinderella" and "Sis Hopkins" here once more, and for seemingly the millionth time, confront us. And how the salve is dripped and the sweet stuffs trickled into the gaping mouths of the burghers! Here a new sanctuary for the blockheads, a fresh asylum for the adorers of "Peg o' My Heart," "Kitty Mackay" and the other Nestlé's Foods of yesteryear. The main character in this most recent sprinkling of the talcum is a poor li'l orphan who doesn't know who was her pa-pa or her ma-ma and who is treated terribly cruel by a nasty mean old woman who runs an orphans' home. This nasty old woman calls her "you ungrateful little imp" and the poor li'l girl, "goaded to distraction," shouts out: "I don't feel any gratitude because I have nothing to be grateful for. When I was eleven years old a lady wanted to adopt me. But you made her take another child instead. I might have had a home, too—like other children—but you stole it away from me!"

When the grief of the audience has subsided, out upon the stage steps the rich and noble hero, who declares "By Jove, it was great to see that little thing demand her RIGHT TO LIVE!" and who says he is going to send the poor little orphan to college. The second act discovers our heroine in her new surroundings. She is just too sweet for anything and as innocent a saucy little

dear as ever lived. Thus the piquant dialogue:

Our Heroine: I've finished physiology. I know all about your insides.
Our Hero: Um—yes.
Our Heroine: I hope you never touch alcohol, because it does dreadful things to your liver. . . . Did you know that we used to be monkeys? You just the same as me?

Et cetera, et cetera. So droll! And just *too* dear! Of course, our hero falls in love with the delightful little thing who, after a year out of the orphanage, has already gained nation-wide fame as a great novelist. The rare flavor and exquisite untheatricality of the ensuing love scene may be plumbed in the several following excerpts from our hero's address:

"I love you with a love so deep, so great, that it overpowers what the world would call my sense of right."
"You came into my existence like a spirit of spring and sunshine."
"The difference of our years forbade that I should recognize the truth and so I deceived myself that your friendship was my sole desire."
"My reason mocked my love."
"My heart would not be stilled, so I went away to fight it out alone."
"Beaten in the struggle between my reason and my love, I ask your aid."
"If somewhere in your heart there is a spark of feeling that my devotion might warm into a glow of love . . . "

And so the *magnum opus* proceeds until "Oh, Judy, Judy, why did you ever send me away from you? Oh, my dear, my dear, did you think my love for you so mean that a matter of your birth could make me pause?" at the stroke of eleven. Piffle for the proletariat. Miss Jean Webster is, self-confessedly, a writer of stories for young school girls. Her "Daddy Longlegs," like her other stories "When Patty Went to College," "Just Patty" and so on, was designed frankly by herself and by her publishers for the young-girl trade. Inasmuch as the play made from "Daddy Longlegs" has scored an enormous theatrical success, could one ask better proof of the mental caliber and status of our American audiences? Miss Ruth Chatterton's talents are wasted on the leading stage rôle of this affair.

Lady Una's virtue has been impugned. Her cruel husband, Cyril Wimborne, K.C., M.P., declines to give her ear and drives her in wrath from his house. Lady Una, proud and haughty, quivers with mortification when the world proceeds to cut her. There is but one to believe in her and he, the brave Sir Harold Courtenay, defends her honour with uplifted fist and is restrained from flooring the despicable Herbert Staveley only at the intervention of the calm Colonel Lennox and young Lushington. Lady Una has but one wish, above every other wish supreme. She longs again to see HER CHILD. But her cruel, heartless, unforgiving husband forbids. "My boy! My boy!" she weeps; "I, his mother, cannot see him, cannot hold him in these longing arms, cannot press him to this breast!!" One night, unable longer to endure her misery, Lady Una creeps back into the house from whose portals she has been banished. "Strike me if you dare," she cries out to her husband, "but I—am—inn-o-cent!" Then in rushes her child, *their* child. Lady Una makes to gather him in a mother's aching arms. But—"No!" proclaims the unrelenting Cyril Wimborne, K.C., M.P., "such as you are unfit to *touch* a child!" But wait. It develops that the dastardly Major Pollock, dying in Africa, has left a confession purging of stain the name of Lady Una. Whereupon the curly-headed little child takes his father's hand and places it in that of his mother, thus reuniting the estranged pair, providing No. 1001 of the series "A Little Child Shall Lead Them" (see page 1 of this magazine), bringing back to stage life the corpse of "East Lynne" and permitting J. and L. Du Rocher Macpherson impudently to assure us, on the Lyric Theater program, that they have written "a new play," said play called "Evidence." This unbelievable spectacle is actually on view in New York at the time of writing. We now know

who paid the rent for Mrs. Rip Van Winkle when Rip Van W. went away. Step up, J. and L. Du Rocher!

A married woman takes on a lover. Her husband gets wind of what is going on and leaves her. The lover chivalrously tells the woman he will marry her. The husband returns. Fortune has been unkind to him and he is poor and cold and starving. But he still loves his wife and she, her compassion aroused, decides to dismiss her lover and remain his. This absorbingly novel and poignantly fresh fable is the sum and substance of the François de Croisset play "L'Epervier," here done by Mr. William Faversham in translation as "The Hawk." It was of this ancient twattle that the New York *Herald's* Paris critic (who is a close friend to M. de Croisset and himself a member of the you-for-me-and-I-for-you school of Gallic dramatic criticism) said "It is one of the masterpieces of the modern French stage"—which thrilling and spicy critique has been made the most of to impress the susceptible local mind. Aside from the sound financial properties of the play—it is so honestly, so bravely, bad that it could not possibly fail in New York—it is difficult for me to appreciate why so evidently sincere an artist of the theater as Mr. Faversham ventured with it into a proscenium arch he has hitherto consistently decorated with literary and dramatic taste of the first order. My respect for this Faversham is such that I must believe he simply needed the money and, as do the most of us when we need the money, did to gain it take the easiest course and give to his public something quite bad, of which he personally was ashamed. Thus, in this instance, the native hinds are presented with the triangle *aux favoris*, which is to say with whiskers, made highly impressive to those hinds through the injection into it of such lofty nomenclature as le Comte George De Dasetta, la Comtesse Marina De Dasetta and le Marquis De Sardeloup, together with scenes laid in well-buttled, tapestry-draped drawing rooms and the Ritz hotel. Of Mr. Faversham's chief feminine support, Mlle. Gabrielle Dorziat, a program folder assures me the lady "in July, 1904, appeared in an entertainment under the immediate patronage of King Edward and Queen Alexandra." Also that "no actress of the Parisian stage is more popular socially." Also, by way of climax, that "she is one of the principal arbiters of fashion." Madame Sarah Bernhardt herself cannot equal such a proud histrionic record. And as for Duse, a mere piker a *mere* piker!

Of Mr. George M. Cohan's play "The Miracle Man," derived from the Packard fiction of the same name, it is difficult for one in sympathy with its author's purpose and not in sympathy with its author's theme to write. To me, the old and still popular notion that the theme of a play is none of the critic's business, that it is his business primarily to concern himself with the play as it stands whether the theme is to his mental digestion or not, is entirely silly. Would that I were such an one that I could treat dispassionately and with cool, unbiased, critical eye each and every thesis employed by each and every dramatic writer, regardless of my own prejudices for or against the theses; but, alas, nature has created me otherwise. For example, were a playwright to produce an absolutely faultless specimen of dramatic writing concerning itself with proving that prohibition is a fine thing or that a husband has a perfect right to shoot the man with whom his wife has dallied, I should probably denounce the work as something worse than drivel. On the other hand, let a playwriter turn out a much less able piece of dramatic writing proving that intoxication is a thoroughly excellent thing for mankind or that, in the second case, it is the husband who ought to be shot, and you will certainly find me aligned with the counsel for the defense. Thus, were George Cohan to write the best play in the world attesting that life-long cripples may be cured in ten minutes by a faith healer and that life-long

criminals may be made to feel a sudden and devastating remorse upon the mere shaking of hands with the old boy, I should undoubtedly have to forget my warm friendship with and admiration for Mr. Cohan long enough to deny that I could possibly cajole myself into believing in such astounding coups.

What Mr. Cohan *has* done is this: he has, out of more than merely dubious materials, with his customary skill contrived two acts of purely theatrical, but enormously effective, moments. He has done a second-act climax that, for sheer electrifying result, has not been surpassed in my day in the stalls. And he has succeeded in holding one in the very face of his illogical fire. So much for the unusual knack for the theater that is his. But what Mr. Cohan has not done is this: he has not remembered that the most serious things in the world become comic in protracted repetition. The German, Austro-Hungarian, and even some of the French playwriters, have built their finest farce comedies upon this very point. Mr. Cohan, as the novelist Packard, has reformed his criminals by the wholesale, one after the other—with nary an exception—and has likewise won over every other character in his play to the influence of faith. He makes no provision for the doubter. Every ball pitched is batted out for a home-run. He leaves not the slightest loophole. "The Miracle Man's" Christian Science is much like that defined by my gifted colleague, Hatteras: "Christian Science is the theory that, since the skyrockets following a wallop in the eye are optical delusions, the wallop itself is a delusion, and the eye another." Its faith, purely a "benign and uplifting booziness."

Furthermore, whereas faith lives ever only in the imagination, is ever abstract, never concrete, might it not have been a more adroit stratagem not to reveal the "miracle man" in the flesh to the audience, but make that audience *feel* his presence though they never actually see him? However able an actor, however adept be he at make-up, however fine the author's conception and written exposition of the rôle, it is yet not wholly gratifying to the faithful to behold their idea of faith personified by a fat man with a long white beard. True, such a spectacle does not provoke *me*, nor my idea of faith—but what is one against the mob? We must remember, as my associate slave, Mencken, says: "The test of truth is ridicule. Very few religious dogmas have ever faced it and survived. Huxley laughed the devils out of the Gadarene swine. Not the laws of the United States, but the mother-in-law joke, brought the Mormons to compromise and surrender. And it was Dowie's whiskers that broke the back of Dowieism."

In another journal whose pages are embellished with my pearls of wisdom I have tried to define the impression one receives from the play "Consequences" thus: George Bernard Shaw enters a synagogue and asks to be shown the baptismal font. They show it to him. Zangwill, upon being told subsequently what has happened, says "Well, what of it?"

This play, done originally by the Horniman aggregation in England, is an attempt to handle the theme of "The House Next Door" satirically. The attempter is one H. F. Rubinstein, a fellow of some considerable wit, of an extreme and belabored verbosity and of the commendable purpose of imitating some one like Shaw, worth imitating, rather than following the approved and safer practise of imitating Sardou or Frances Hodgson Burnett. The usual way of approaching the Jew as a dramatic figure is, of course, through the box-office. That is to say, to gild the Jew with astounding virtues and perfume him with fine odors. Hence the bank accounts of such discerning tiptoers as Mr. Augustus Thomas, Mr. Hartley Manners and the like. The arbitrary heroes of the American box-office drama are: Jews, husbands, men who never went to college, Western mining engineers, crooks, men accused

of murder, Irishmen (if they can sing), army lieutenants and bad painters. The dramatist who would gather in large gold must keep this list nailed over his desk. Just as he must forever remember that the arbitrary table of heroines includes grandmothers, governesses who have been seduced by the son of the family, sweet young girls who go to bachelor apartments in all innocence, orphans, married women, women who believe in equal sex rights and damfools in general.

The author of "Consequences" has tackled the Jew without the usual salve smear. And so has spat upon the box-office. For this, at least, to him, credit. The fault of his play rests in the fact that, like most imitators of Shaw, he has succeeded in imitating Shaw's garrulity without being successful in imitating the substance of Shaw's garrulity. Anyone can easily and successfully imitate a dramatist such, let us say, as Charles Klein, because Mr. Klein is merely verbose in a hollow, empty way; but it is another thing to imitate with any degree of closeness an agile writer like Shaw. For the closer a writer imitates Shaw, the more apparent becomes the wide difference between them. As example, where a more successful imitator of Shaw than Wedekind, or Brieux, or Gustav Wied —and where figures more distant each in turn from the original? Or, to handle Shaw himself, where a closer imitator (in "The Philanderer") of the Arno Holz attitude in "Die Sozialaristokraten"—yet where two men wider apart?

In the storing-house tombs may be found, with thorough appropriateness, many of the recent dramatic visitations. The archeologist may here excavate the corpses of divers strange creatures. For instance, a play by Mr. George Scarborough entitled "What Is Love?" The central philosophy of this scholarly specimen was as follows: true love is to be detected by a woman only in the effect upon her of a man's kiss. A truly profound doctrine, a massive thought, the emission of a super-Nietzschean brain! A similar idea may be found, unelaborated, in a play by the Dutch playwright, Marquandt Van Vryndt. The play was an excellent companion piece to that previous discharge of Scarborough nonsense known as "The Lure." Compare with such schoolboy dalliance with the subject of "What Is Love?", the approach of the same subject by the German Eulenberg in the play called "Belinda." Or against Eulenberg's "Belinda," with its dubious tragedy, the cynical wit of the poet Gottfried Keller, who makes a loving widow, kneeling at the fresh grave of her adored husband, ponder on the new life that is before her. In another vault, the explorer will discover the Lucienne Nepoly drama, "The Elder Son," a carefully conceived sleeping potion purporting to discuss the duplex family situation, *i.e.*, the widow with children who marries the widower with children. In another, "A Modern Girl," purloined from Felix Fillipi's "Der Helfer." The extreme modernness of the girl of the title was indicated by the two American ladies who rewrote the play by causing the baggage to display her legs and refer to Bernard Shaw. In still another, Paul Armstrong's "Heart of a Thief," in which the public was informed by the author with perfect seriousness that there actually exists among crooks the practise of picking pockets.

"Kick In" (Willard Mack)—A melodrama containing several well-poised vaudeville thrills. In a speech on the opening night, the author promised the audience faithfully he would never, so long as he lived, foist upon the public an intellectual play. One look at the author was sufficient to indicate that he is a man of his word.

"Big Jim Garrity" (Owen Davis)—This time Mr. Davis has written "The Silver King."

"The Salamander" (Owen Johnson)—A dramatization of the best smeller of the same name. Supreme nonsense.

"A Pair of Silk Stockings" (Cyril Harcourt)—Amiable nothingness, well acted.

"The Highway of Life" (Louis N. Parker)—A successful attempt to murder "David Copperfield."

MUSH FOR THE MULTITUDE

By H. L. Mencken

MIDWAY between the tales of persecution and passion that address themselves frankly to servant girls, country school-teachers and the public stenographers in commercial hotels and those works of popular romance which yet hang hazardously, as it were, upon the far-flung yardarms of beautiful letters—midway, as I say, between these wholly atrocious and quasi-respectable evangels of amour and derring-do, there floats a literature vast, gaudy and rich in usufructs, which outrages all sense and probability without descending to actual vulgarity and buffoonery, and so manages to impinge agreeably upon that vast and money-in-pocket public which takes instinctively a safe, middle course in all things, preferring Sousa's band to either a street piano or the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and the New York *Times* to either the *Evening Journal* or the *Evening Post,* and Dr. Woodrow Wilson to either Debs or Mellen, and dinner at six o'clock to either dinner at noon or dinner at eight-thirty, and three children (two boys and a girl) to either the lone heir of Fifth Avenue or the all-the-traffic-can bear hatching of the Ghetto, and honest malt liquor to either Croton water or champagne, and Rosa Bonheur's "The Horse Fair" to either Corot's "Danse de Nymphes" or a "Portrait of a Lady" from the *Police Gazette,* and fried chicken to either liver or terrapin, and a once-a-week religion to either religion every day or no religion at all, and the Odd Fellows to either the Trappists or the Black Hand, and a fairly pretty girl who can cook fairly well to either a prettier girl who can't cook a stroke or a good cook who sours the milk.

To make an end, the public I refer to is that huge body of honest and right-thinking folk which constitutes the heart, lungs and bowels of this great republic—that sturdy multitude which believes in newspapers, equinoctial storms, trust-busting, the Declaration of Independence, teleology, the direct primary, the uplift, trial by jury, monogamy, the Weather Bureau, Congress and the moral order of the world—that innumerable caravan of middling, dollar-grubbing, lodge-joining, quack-ridden folk which the Socialists sneer at loftily as the *bourgeoisie,* and politicians slobber over as the bulwark of our liberties. And, by the same token, the meridional, intermediate literature that I speak of is that literature without end which lifts its dizzy pyramids from the book-counters in the department stores, and from which, ever and anon, there emerges that prize of great price, the best-seller. The essence of this literature is sentiment, and the essence of that sentiment is hope. Its aim is to fill the breast with soothing and optimistic emotions —to make the fat woman forget that she is fat, to purge the tired business man of his bile, to convince the flapper that Douglas Fairbanks may yet learn to love her, to prove that this dreary old world, as botched and bad as it is, might yet be a darn sight worse.

I offer "The Rosary," "Soldiers of Fortune," "Laddie," "The Helmet of Navarre," "Little Lord Fauntleroy," "Freckles," "Eben Holden" and "V. V.'s Eyes" as specimens, and so pass on to the latest example, to-wit,

"BAMBI," by Marjorie Benton Cooke (*Doubleday-Page*). By the time this reaches you, I have no doubt, "BAMBI" will be all the rage in your vicinage. You will be hearing about it on all sides. You will see allusions to it in your evening paper. You will observe it on the desk of your stenographer. Your wife (if you belong to the gnarled and persecuted sex) will be urging you to read it and mark it well. You yourself (if you are fair and have the price) will be wearing a Bambi petticoat or a Bambi collar or a pair of Bambi stockings or a Bambi something-more-intimate-still. Such, alas, is the course that best-sellers run! They permeate and poison the atmosphere of the whole land. It is impossible to get away from them. They invade the most secure retreats, even the very jails and almshouses. Serving thirty days myself, under the Sherman Act, during the late rage for "The Salamander," I had it thrust upon me by the rector of the bastile, and had to read it to get rid of him.

Wherefore, in sympathy, as it were, I have ploughed through "BAMBI" in time to tell you what it is about before you have to read it yourself, thus hoping to save you from the dangers of too much joy. It is a tale, as you may suspect, of young love, and the heroine is a brilliant young lady named Miss Francesca Parkhurst, the daughter of Professor James Parkhurst, Ph.D., the eminent but somewhat balmy mathematician. Professor Parkhurst, as Bambi herself says, knows more about mathematics than the man who invented them, but outside the domain of figures his gigantic intellect refuses to function. Thus he always forgets to go to his lecture-room unless Bambi heads him in the right direction at the right hour, and if it were not for her careful inspection of his make-up, he would often set off with his detachable cuffs upon his ankles instead of upon his wrists, and the skirts of his shirt outside instead of inside his pantaloons. In a word, this Professor Parkhurst is the standard college professor of the best-sellers—the genial jackass we know and love of old. The college professor of the stern, cold world, perhaps, is a far different creature: I once knew one, in fact, who played the races and was a first-rate amateur bartender, and there is record of another who went into politics and clawed his way to a very high office. But in romance, of course, no such heretics are allowed. The college professor of prose fiction is always an absent-minded old boob, who is forever stumbling over his own feet, and he always has a pretty daughter to swab up his waistcoat after he has dined, and to chase away the *ganovim* who are trying to rob him, and to fill his house with an air of innocent and youthful gayety.

Naturally enough, this Professor Parkhurst of our present inquest is not at all surprised when sweet Bambi tells him that she has decided to marry young Jarvis Jocelyn, the rising uplifter, nor even when she tells him that Jarvis knows nothing about it, nor even when she kidnaps Jarvis while he is in a state of coma and sends for a preacher and marries him on the spot, nor even when she puts him to bed *a capella* on the third floor of the house, and devotes her honeymoon to gathering up and sorting out the flying pages of the Great Drama that he is writing. College professors of the standard model do not shy at such doings. Like babies in arms, they see the world only as a series of indistinct shadows. It would not have made much impression upon Professor Parkhurst had Bambi invited the ashman to dinner or flavored the soup with witch-hazel or come to the meal herself in a bathing-suit. And so it makes very little impression upon him when she shanghais Jarvis and internes the poor fellow in the garret and kicks up a scandal that shakes the whole town. He is dimly conscious that something is going on, just as an infant is dimly conscious that it is light at times and dark at times, but further than that he recks and wots not.

Well, well, we must be getting on! What does Bambi do next? Next she

grabs a pencil and a pad of paper and dashes off a short story of her own, with herself, Jarvis and the professor as its characters. Then she tires of it and puts it away. Then, one day, she picks up a New York magazine containing an offer of $500 cash for the best short story submitted in competition. Then she gets out her story, has it typewritten and sends it in. Then —what! have you guessed it? Clever you are, indeed! Yes, even so: then she wins the prize. And then, tucking Jarvis under her arm, she goes to New York and tries to sell the Great Drama. And then she spends a week of sitting in the anterooms of theatrical managers. And then, her story being published under a *nom de plume*, she finds herself an anonymous celebrity and is hospitably received by the genial Bob Davis, editor of *Munsey's*. And then another and much slimmer magazine editor—no doubt G. J. Nathan, thinly disguised—falls in love with her and gives her many valuable pointers. And then Charles Frohman proposes to have her story dramatized, and she lures him into offering Jarvis the job, and then pitches in and helps to perform it. And then the play makes a tremendous hit on Broadway, and she confesses the whole plot, and Jarvis falls desperately in love with her, and we part from them in each other's arms.

A sweet, sweet story. A string of gum-drops. A sugar-teat beyond compare. Of such great probabilities, of such searching reports of human motive and act, the best seller is all compact. If you have a heart, if you can feel and understand, if your cheers for the true, the good and the beautiful are truly sincere, then this one will squeeze a tear from your leaden eye and send it cascading down your nose. And if, on the contrary, you are one of those cheap barroom cynics who think it is smart to make game of honest sentiment and pure art, then it will give you the loud, coarse guffaw that you crave. But do not laugh too much, dear friend, however hard your heart, however tough your hide. The mission of such things as "Bambi" is, after all, no mean one. Remember the fat woman —how it will make her forget that she is fat. Remember the tired business man—how it will lift him out of his wallow and fill him with a noble enthusiasm for virtue and its rewards. Remember the flapper — how it will thrill her to the very soles of her feet and people her dreams with visions of gallant knights and lighten that doom which makes her actual beau a baseball fan and corrupts him with a loathing for literature and gives him large, hairy hands and a *flair* for burlesque shows and freckles on his neck. And so to other things.

The distinguishing thing about "The Clarion," by Samuel Hopkins Adams (*Houghton*), is that the villain is so much more pleasant and likable a fellow than the hero that even the author succumbs to him toward the end, thus leaving the hero, as it were, upon the burning deck. A sad, sad fact, but true, and not only true, but also quite natural. One may respect and venerate so virtuous a young fellow as Harrington Surtaine, and wish him well in his effort to clean up the city of Worthington, but it is extremely difficult to like him. The uplift does not nourish *gemüthlichkeit*. There is little of the milk of human kindness in the arteries of a forward-looker and right-thinker. Heaven for climate, but Hell for society! The father of Harrington, old Dr. L. André Surtaine (formerly Prof. Andy Certain), the millionaire patent-medicine quack, is hell-bent by all the signs, and yet what a charming old scoundrel he is! How delightful his manners! How plausible his tongue! As I say, even Mr. Adams cannot be angry with him for long. When we take leave of him at last, he is the central figure in the one genuinely excellent scene of the book. He has been converted by his son's pious eloquence; he has seen the error of his ways; he has decided to stop poisoning the populace with Certina, that sovereign balm for man and beast. But what of his huge factory, with its army of workpeople,

all of them his enthusiastic admirers, all his dependents? Be of good cheer: he has forgotten neither it nor them. Henceforth the factory is to be devoted to a pure and lofty purpose—to wit, the manufacture of Cerebread, "the one sure, unfailing, reliable upbuilder for brain-workers, nervous folks, tired-outs and broken-downs!" Morality wins!

Aside from the old quack, a rich and racy fellow, the personages of the tale lack human juiciness; one hears them creaking stiffly as they move. The *Clarion* of the title is the newspaper that young Harrington buys. He finds it pandering obscenely to the Interests, doing the dirty work of politicians, shielding the oppressors of the working-girl; he changes it into a militant champion of the true, the good and the beautiful. Naturally enough, an amazed *sforzando* yell proceeds from the gullets of the unmasked malefactors; they are hot for surcease and revenge. But Harrington keeps sternly on, turning neither to the right nor to the left. The Consumers' League is with him; the Committee of One Hundred is with him; the Boy Scouts are with him; God is with him. Not man nor devil can stay him in his arctic course. Even his dear old father is not safe from his darts and bludgeons of righteousness. Worse still, even the girl of his heart, beauteous Miss Esmé Elliot, is overtaken and flattened out by the steam-roller of his rectitude. But in the end, of course, he and Esmé make it up. To be quite accurate, it is Esmé who opens the negotiations, but Harrington, it must be said, meets her in a tolerant and forgiving spirit. Such are the rewards of those who scheme and sweat to save their fellowmen—at least in uplift novels.

Let us now slide gracefully over "Little Eve Edgarton," by Eleanor Hallowell Abbott (*Century*), in which there is a heroine who reads Sanskrit, dances like a fairy, knows all about the Cryptodira and the Amphichelydia, and is thirty years old; and over "The Charmed Life of Miss Austin," by Samuel Merwin (*Century*), in which a beautiful young American girl leads a sort of Haroun al Rashid life on the China Coast, and has all sorts of thrilling adventures and is finally married to the tune of her nerve-wrecked uncle's "Thank God!"; and over "The Prince of Graustark," by George Barr McCutcheon (*Dodd-Mead*), a sort of good-humored *reductio ad absurdum* of the Zenda-Graustark confection of yesteryear; and over "The Uncertain Glory," by H. F. Prevost Battersby (*Lane*), the saga of a South American revolution, with the usual prehensile President, the usual pretty daughter, the usual brave young engineer, the usual steam yacht, and the usual U. S. S. *Omaha;* and over "The Duke of Oblivion," by John Reed Scott (*Lippincott*), in which an American yachting party lands upon a lost island in the West Indies, and its members are drafted for eugenic purposes by the islanders; and over "Under Cover," by Roi Cooper Megrue (*Little-Brown*), a novelization of the author's comedy of the same name, the secret of which the publishers happily request me not to reveal—let us soar, so to speak, over all these fair flowers of fancy that we may arrive the sooner at "The Lay Anthony," by Joseph Hergesheimer (*Kennerley*), the tragedy of a virtuous young man.

This young man bears the name of Tony Ball, and his nightly resort is Doc Allhop's drug store. There, amid the Don Giovannis and Henry VIII's, the Casanovas and Leopold II's, the Benvenuto Cellinis and Albert Edwards of Ellerton—there, in that proud company of giants of amour, he poses as the peer of the best. No rival leaper through No. 7 can match him; he is the acknowledged master of all the local seducers and voluptuaries. And yet, in sober truth, this terrible creature is actually an innocent; his vast repute is all boasting and moonshine; his dark deeds of illicit passion lie wholly in the telling; no old maid in the township is more chaste than he. Worse still, a sardonic fate dogs all his efforts to

turn smoke into fire. Does a fancy woman pass through Ellerton, rolling an inviting eye? Then he is sure to be either out of funds or out of town. Does a factory-girl turn into paths of dalliance? Then he always hears of it too late. Tony tries his best, but destiny stands in his way. In public fame, a byword and a hissing for loose living, he seems doomed to live out his life, in private truth, as a sort of monastery of one reluctant monk.

Then he falls in love with young Eliza Dreen, and at once he is purged of all his levantine and abominable aspirations. His aim now is not to reduce the entire township to a wilderness of carnality, but to make himself worthy of Eliza's virtuous affection. To that end he is willing to offer any sacrifice, even to the staggering one of parting from Eliza. Westward his footsteps wend their way; he will grow rich, eminent, a hero she may be proud of. When a chance acquaintance, skirted and acquiescent, offers him the realization of his old dream, he flees from her in horror. And then, just as this new and ascetic Tony is getting firmly upon his legs, fate strikes him down. The news reaches him by a roundabout route: the fair Eliza is dead. Tony knows what to do. Straight back to sin! The life of shame! Women must pay the price—and this time they must be real. Alas, for poor Tony; fate has still another joke to play upon him, another blow to deal out to him. Ten minutes after he reaches the bordello of his choice there is a fight; a minute more and he is shot through the head! A virgin to the last! White wings for Ellerton's scourge!

Without question, an idea that offers the makings of a first-rate novel. There is something magnificently ironical about it; one can fancy what such a herculean humorist as Joseph Conrad would make of it, or even Leonid Andreyev, or Hermann Sudermann, or, to drop to mere satirists, Max Beerbohm. But this Mr. Hergesheimer, alas, is not up to it. He starts off well enough; he gives us the fraudulent Lothario in bright and plausible colors. But the moment little Eliza comes upon the scene, the story begins to go to pieces. Eliza is never quite human; she never even *seems* human. There is a pervasive improbability about her; she belongs to the ancient stock of fair young things. Nor is there much more reality in the persons that Tony encounters later on—among them a stuffed dummy of a scientist, a brother to the father of Bambi Parkhurst. Nor is the final catastrophe well managed. In brief, the book is botched in the writing; the author's planning is far ahead of his execution. But let us at least remember him as one who made a creditable attempt. Novels with genuine ideas in them are not so common that we can afford to sniff at them.

In "THE HOUSE," by Henry Bordeaux, the French platitudinarian (*Duffield*), I can find nothing but a series of sentimental reminiscences of boyhood and youth—apparently the author's. Whether the thing is fiction or autobiography I cannot tell you. Probably it is a mixture of the two. In "THE MAN WITH THE DOUBLE HEART," by Muriel Hine (*Lane*), there is that compound of the marvelous and the mushy which appeals irresistibly to the imperfectly intelligent. In "MAID OF THE MIST," by John Oxenham (*Lane*), we come upon our senile friend, the tale of the castaways on a desert island, and it is even sillier than usual. In "THE GILDED CHRYSALIS," by Gertrude Pahlow (*Duffield*), there is the well-told story of a lively young woman's reaction against the stuffy environment of a college town, and on the slip-cover there is a ghastly caricature of the heroine. And in "THE THREE FURLONGERS," by Sheila Kaye-Smith (*Lippincott*), there is the sad chronicle of the Furlonger family—two brothers and a sister. One of the brothers dies, and the survivor and the sister fall in love with a maid and a young man who desert them and fall in love with each other. A depressing business, to be sure—but, for all that, this Miss

Kaye-Smith writes with unmistakable skill. She will be heard from, I venture, later on.

Out of the brimming washtub of novels remaining I dredge "NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH," by Frederic S. Isham (*Bobbs-Merrill*), not because it is a work of arresting merit (for, as a matter of fact, I have been wholly unable to read it), but because it is offered by the publishers at the modest price of fifty cents. This price, of course, is not unprecedented. There is a firm in New York that has made a fortune selling full-length novels at fifty cents—not cheap yellow-backs, mind you, but masterpieces by such geniuses as E. Phillips Oppenheim, the Williamsons and Harold MacGrath. But this firm, of course, does not deal in masterpieces in their first youth; it rather waits, as it were, until the bloom has gone from them—or, more specifically, until they have ceased to be best-sellers, or even second best-sellers—and then dangles them at cut rates before that public which subordinates its frenzy for great literature to its instinct of frugality. Such a public exists in this fair republic; moreover, it is large. Hence the popularity of these second impressions of masterpieces—identical in every detail with the first impressions at $1.10, $1.20 and $1.30—and the prosperity of the firm aforesaid.

"NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH," however, is no such warmed-over delicacy. Its fifty-cent form is its first form: as the slip-cover says, it is "new and complete." How, then, does it differ from the standard $1.20 novel of commerce? So far as these eyes can see, in no way that is essential or even important. The paper on which it is printed is a bit thinner than usual; the margins of the pages are narrower; the slip-cover is in but six or eight colors; the permanent cover is bare of gilt; there are no gorgeous, full-page pictures by Harrison Fisher, Howard Chandler Christy and Herman Pfeifer. But are these lacks, after all, really defects? I presume to deny it. All other things being equal, the smaller a novel is in bulk, and the lighter in weight, and the less gilt it has upon its cover, and the fewer pictures of automobilists seven feet high, the more cleanly and comfortable and satisfactory that novel is to read. The essence of prose fiction is not quantity, nor even what the Boston critics call a "front," but simply quality. "Henry Esmond," printed on Japanese napkins, would still be well worth reading; the latest work of Richard Harding Davis, printed on vellum and with illustrations by Leonardo da Vinci, would still be a vain and silly thing.

Why, indeed, should *any* novel sell for more than fifty cents? Not one in two hundred is worth even forty-nine. Why should people pay a dollar and a quarter apiece for books that are read only to be thrown away—books of no more permanent value than a back number of the *Evening Telegram*—books that no man of the slightest self-respect would think of putting into his library? It costs no more than fifteen cents a copy to print and bind the average novel as well as the job deserves to be done. Add five cents for the author's royalty, five more for advertising and ten for the publisher's profit—and there still remains, at fifty cents, a gain of forty per cent for the retailer. This is more than the man makes who sells you collars; it is almost as much as the man makes who sells you morphine, heroin and cocaine. In brief, it is enough, ample, sufficient, adequate, plenty, *genug, assez, satis, abbastanza, bastante, nok, dostateczny.* Wherefore, and by reason of which, I commend "NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH" to your kind attention, and with it the four brethren that accompany it, to-wit, "THE ADVENTURES OF KATHLYN," by Harold MacGrath; "THE RED MIRAGE," by I. A. R. Wylie; "WHITAKER'S DUKEDOM," by Edgar Jepson, and "A TALE OF RED ROSES," by George Randolph Chester. I do not detain you with critical reviews of these pioneer fifty-centers: good, bad or indifferent, they are well worth the money.

Which brings us to "THRACIAN SEA," by John Helston (*Macmillan*),

a racing novel by a Socialist—dull, indeed, to the present subscriber, who knows and cares nothing whatever about horse-racing, and wishes heartily that all Socialists were in hell. And to "LOVE INSURANCE," by Earl Derr Biggers (*Bobbs-Merrill*), a harmless piece of extravagant foolery by the gentleman who enriched the national literature with "Seven Keys to Baldpate." And to "THE SPRING LADY," by Mary Brecht Pulver (*Bobbs-Merrill*), in which Mrs. Rita Franklin, after six years of married life, gets into such a state of nerves that she packs up and runs away from her husband, Mr. Laurence Franklin, only to discover that the discontent stirring within her is a yearning for maternity, which news she then communicates to Laurence, somewhat to his surprise. And to "THE TWENTY-FOURTH OF JUNE," by Grace S. Richmond (*Doubleday-Page*), and "THE LITTLE RED CHIMNEY," by Mary Finley Leonard (*Duffield*), tales of true love. And to "GAMBIER'S ADVOCATE," by Ronald MacDonald (*Lane*), and "BIG TREMAINE," by Marie Van Vorst (*Little-Brown*), in which two gentlemen accused of crime live it down magnificently, and are rewarded by the populace, the one with a seat in the House of Commons and the other with a seat in the House of Representatives. And to "WHEN TO LOCK THE STABLE," by Homer Croy (*Bobbs-Merrill*), and "A KNIGHT ON WHEELS," by Ian Hay (*Houghton*), a pair of brisk books of humor. And to "THE STREET OF SEVEN STARS," by Mary Roberts Rinehart (*Houghton*), in which, instead of that busy author's usual murder mystery, we have an agreeable story of amour in Vienna, with an American violiniste for the party of the first part, and a young American medical man for the party of the second part.

"THE DUCHESS OF WREX," by Hugh Walpole (*Doran*), has bored me unspeakably. Despite a certain fascination in the old duchess, ruling her world with a rod of iron from her throne-room in Portland place, I have failed ignominiously in all my efforts to read the book to the end. Can this be the same Walpole who wrote "The Gods and Mr. Perrin," that sardonic and excellent novel of yesteryear? The evidence seems to show that it is—but not much of that evidence is in "The Duchess of Wrex." I venture a guess that the latter was done some time back, before Walpole struck his stride. It lacks the incisive directness of "The Gods and Mr. Perrin," the firm grip upon character and situation, the clarity of outline, the feeling for form. It drags, it lumbers, it is dull. Which no one, having truth in his heart, will ever say of "THE MUTINY OF THE ELSINORE," by Jack London (*Macmillan*), a rip-snorting sea yarn in the manner of "The Sea-Wolf," and, if anything, more violent, more thrilling, more gorgeous. Here, indeed, London, the artisan, is at his very best; the characters are chopped out with great, rough strokes; the situations are built up with the utmost skill; the writing is full of harsh colors and insinuating address. London, the artist, of course, is not much in it; the fellow we observe at his tricks in London, the artisan. But what a first-rate journeyman he is! How thoroughly well he knows his trade! How boldly he stands above the common run of fictioneers!

In the novels that remain—a high, high stack, chromatic, solid, unalluring—I can find little of arresting interest. "SATURDAY'S CHILD," by Kathleen Norris (*Macmillan*), starts off promisingly with breezy chapters from the life of a poor but virtuous working-girl, and even after she leaves the dingy office of Hunter, Baxter & Hunter, wholesale druggists, and fares forth upon her Great Adventure there remains a considerable liveliness in the story, but toward the end it drifts into commonplace sentimentalism, and so blows up. "THE CLEAN HEART," by A. S. M. Hutchinson (*Little-Brown*), suffers much the same fate. "A MOTHER IN EXILE" (*Little-Brown*), the sad story of a lady whose husband strikes her. A depressing business. And a gloomy, tedious account of it.

IN THE SHOPS OF THE SMART SET

By Marion A. Rubincam

THE SMART SET SHOPPING DEPARTMENT, now re-inaugurated, will be glad to answer questions regarding shopping and the New York shops. Readers of THE SMART SET inquiring where articles described are purchasable should enclose a stamp for reply, and state page and month. Purchasing done free of charge. Address: "EDITOR, SMART SET SHOPPING DEPARTMENT."

IT'S winter. This is not deduced from the calendar, nor from the weather, which, after all, is merely an excuse for the wearing of smart furs. It's *socially* winter—one knows it by the number of limousines that chug their way through the crowds on the Avenue, by the shimmering *café* tables without end whereat the swagger dine, by the increasing length of the society columns in the gazettes of commerce.

Were there no other signs, one might know it by the shop windows, now in the full of their winter glory. The loveliest, the latest—and the most expensive—things in New York are displayed in them—gifts, jewels, furs, gowns, exotic silks, and all those delightfully feminine things that for lack of a better and more concrete definition are called "accessories." A walk up Fifth Avenue from Madison Square, with occasional turns into a cross street or so, is like sauntering through the pages of some wonderful fashion book—a fashion book, moreover, that is made up new each day.

It is nearing Christmas, too. One knows it, not by the position of a star in the heavens—but by the array of givable things that fill the windows of the shops, and by the folk that stop to look in, speculating as to which gift would be most suitable for this or that friend. Gifts receive as much attention as the new fashions—though these are the cause of much of the animated conversation one hears along the Avenue.

As each new season approaches, the fashion designers cry, "The styles this time are much more beautiful than any we have had," until the saying has grown somewhat trite. Yet, like most things trite, it holds true; new fashions must be lovelier, else they simply would not be. They must be seen in the perspective of a couple of years or so to be appraised truly; they must be eyed when they have lost the charm of novelty, in comparison with what preceded them and what succeeded them.

But this season the designers have come somewhat nearer an artist's or sculptor's ideal of woman's dress—loose, unbroken lines, rich fabric and general simplicity of outline. There are no fussy details, no cutting of goods into small pieces and sewing them hard and fast to a tightly fitted lining. Last year's silhouette was a triangle attempting to stand on its head, with the center of gravity running out one side—an effect produced by piling furs around the neck, binding the ankles with tight skirts, and affecting a slouch. This year's silhouette reverses the order.

THE BASQUE A SOCIAL OUTCAST

The basque is not mentioned in polite society any more—it having committed the social *faux pas* of passing out of date. It is gone—and forgotten by fashionable women. In its place the "casaque," "cuirass," "corselet" or "Moyen Age" reign supreme by right of their greater beauty. They cling at the top, giving excellent lines around the shoulders and arms, hang loose to the waist, where they are caught by a sash or girdle that gives the bit of curve needed there—and with every little motion, standing, walking, even

breathing, the lines of the figure are delicately suggested. The effect is elusive, and therefore infinitely more artistic than the uncompromising outline of a tight waist. The skirt is never narrow, nor wide enough to be injurious by reason of its own weight.

Really, most of the ingenuity of the designers has been expended on skirts this season, for there are limitations to what one may do to the waist. Having cut its neckline a number of fanciful ways, embroidered it daintily or covered it with shimmering pailettes until it looks like a glorified coat-of-mail, or perhaps run it in one piece with a tunic —one stops. But the skirt! Its possibilities seem endless! After a few seasons of having been reduced to the least common multiple, it has come back as a thing of some large importance.

It is very short—but—it is very wide. Anywhere from two to five yards is correct—the width being in proportion to the filminess of the fabric. Mostly it is pleated to keep the flare from being too vulgarly exaggerated, and to impart a floating, swaying effect in which walking is possessed of grace. Incidentally, it need not any more hang evenly—in fact, if it manages a dip here and there, so much the better. Many skirts are pulled high back or front, or to one side; one imported gown has a skirt that touches the floor at four points but clears it by more than six inches in between. One shop shows a suit with a "cuff" skirt, the hem turned up, like the erstwhile cuff on a man's trousers. And another suit shows a "bloomer" skirt, the material made over a shorter lining, that draws it up and under like a bloomer. Russian tunics are on their dark way to join the basque.

SLEEVES—MORE OR LESS

What milady lacks in sleeves on her evening gowns—the truth of the matter being that she wears none at all on them—she makes up in her daytime frocks. For here her sleeves come chastely down to her very fingers, a super-modesty balanced by the transparency of the sleeves themselves. Chiffon, lace or net is used, something that reveals yet hides the arm, much as the bodice conceals yet reveals the curve of the waist. Only the most practical frocks have sleeves—and as the frocks are mostly serge the sleeves are mostly black satin, long and tight.

There is a saying about "robbing Peter to pay Paul" which applies to our new neckwear—for what Dame Fashion has snipped off the bottom of the skirt she has added onto the collar. It mounts quite high, does the collar, and it may button close up under the chin, or it may proceed into an extra-deep V in the front, but in any case it resolves itself into a high stock from ear to ear in the back. And in its very newest form, we have it in dainty colors.

For instance, flesh pink is a favorite shade, and it is predicted that it will be used as much as white this winter. The effect from a slight distance is often rather startling—one seems to be wearing a dress cut much lower than Mrs. Grundy allows—when, in fact, one is wearing a charmeuse vest, flesh pink, for which one paid a neat sum. One shop is featuring flesh-color neckwear for Christmas gifts.

LOOKING TO XMAS

Yes, the spirit of Christmas is already abroad in the shops. One may express one's feeling of peace and good will toward one's fellow men by any of thousands of gifts, in this City of Wonderful Shops. The neckwear counter is only one place where things the feminine gender delights in may be found. The charmeuse sets mentioned above—collar, vest and cuffs—average $7 a set in price. But dyed batiste sets cost much less and are as dainty—these come in flesh, ciel or orchid, at $2.75 and $3.75 a set.

Gloves are staple gifts too—and as a rule, novelties are few and far between. But washable cape gloves, tan color, are quite new and very practical. The skin has been subjected to some process that makes it washable, and doubly serviceable. For either men or women these are $2 a pair.

The daintiest women's gloves I have ever seen are in one of the larger shops. They are long, white, and embroidered in silk and seed pearls, the design not elaborate—there is just enough of it to be thoroughly charming. These are $5.75 a pair.

Guest-room knockers are charming to give away—or to keep. One shop carries them at $1.25 each, the designs reminiscent of the carvings on the old-world cathedrals.

Have you ever seen a "thumb-nail" edition of the Bible? The smallest I ever saw measures about one by two inches, and is to be found in a Fifth Avenue book-shop. It carries a magnifying glass tucked into the back cover, and comes chained to a miniature pulpit. The whole is a reproduction of the Bibles placed in the English churches at the decree of Edward VI, it is really readable—with the glass—and a novel gift—$1.50.

Are there Christmas brides? One shop shows adorable favors for brides' luncheons; wee bags of rice, tied up in maline and fastened with ribbon, with a hand-painted place card attached. The colors will match the usual schemes of decoration—green, white pink or violet. These are $3 a dozen.

HAND-MADE JEWELRY

Tucked away in a big building near the Avenue I have found a shop brimful of Christmas inspiration. They have wonderful gifts to show, and every one hand-made. Their jewelry, for instance, is a delight to the artistic eye. I saw a piece of kunzite set with pearls and aquamarines, with an odd chain—the whole necklace $150. And a set of cuff links and scarf pin for a man—hand-carved scarabs cut from ivory, gold mounted, at $54 the set. And—here is something!—jewelry just for children—pins made of flat silver with animals cut out of it—at $2.50 apiece.

They have a silver punch bowl, also hand-made, a copy of one that Paul Revere designed—the gentleman, it seems, did other things than ride through the night. This is $150—but other hand-made pieces—smaller bowls and flat silverware—may be had at very inexpensive prices. And each piece has a delicate irregularity that gives it a charm not to be found in the mere commercial ware.

Someone claims that the handkerchief was the first Christmas gift, and that its descendants increase by the millions each year. That may be—yet a handkerchief is about the most acceptable gift there is, particularly if it is hand-made. One shop sells very feminine-looking affairs with hand-run hems and one embroidered initial at 25c apiece—men's hemstitched handkerchiefs at $7 a dozen.

Many women like to give hand-embroidered gifts, yet have not the time, these busy days, to sit down and do the work. For these the embroidered "patterns" that need only to be cut out and sewed together are just ideal. One shop that specializes in embroidered things shows babies' dress patterns exquisitely embroidered around the hem, sleeves and yoke—hand-work, mind you—at $2.25 each.

And while we're on the subject of hand-embroidery—do you know that hand-worked French underwear can be bought cheaper than some ordinary grades of domestic, machine-made goods? One very good shop sells chemises, scalloped and embroidered very simply with a few sprays of flowers, at $1 to $3—the $3 kinds are the new "envelope" style; the plain chemises can be altered to the envelope sort very easily. Incidentally, the foreign lingerie wears much longer than the same priced domestic kind—and is much daintier.

FOR "ANTIQUE" LOVERS

There is a very interesting store near the Avenue which is a sort of "Mill of Youth" for furniture. In other words, you may send your unwanted or battered-up antiques there, and select from the done-over pieces in the show-rooms, exchanging one for the other. They showed me wonderful things—some

good enough for museum show pieces. One was a bedroom set in the French colonial style, mahogany with brass work trimmings, the bed a copy of Napoleon's now in the Sans Souci palace. Four other pieces had been built to match—cheval glass, bureau, chiffonier and toilet table. It was $1,000.

They have a "Dower Chest" too—a name so much prettier than the cynical title "Hope Box," for $83. It is a capacious mahogany affair beautifully carved over the top and sides, and lined with cedar, lest any stray moth destroy the work the maiden's hands lay in it. And they have "Low Boys" at $35, that make ideal dressing-tables if a mirror is hung above them. They have shell carvings and the stunted, curved legs known as "cabriole."

Gifts in profusion, at tiny prices, are shown here—three-legged candle-stands at $5, shaving mirrors at $6 and $8—the $8 ones with a drawer attached, capacious work-boxes on stands at $9, "nests of tables" with Dutch marquetry work in them—the four tables at $25. Muffin stands are $5.50 and mahogany serving trays $3.50 to $9, according to the elaboration of the inlay work.

VAIN LITTLE GIFTS

A very vain but very dainty little gift is to be found at one of the silversmiths—a black silk wrist bag with a round silver top that lays flat against one side of the bag. Inside the top holds a mirror and a coin-holder; the bag is quite generous and capable of carrying any number of trifles. These are $25 and $35.

"Casque" combs are vain too—and very pretty. In fact, they are the prettiest hair ornaments that have made their début this season. The top is rounded at one end, curving to a tapering point; the teeth of the comb are hidden beneath. The plain ones may be had as low as $1—others, paved solidly with rhinestones, are $8.50. When they are worn at the side of the head, showing beneath the brim of a tilted black hat, the effect is startling.

A Christmas gift not so vain, and rather more useful, is an Angora sweater-set (sweater, cap and scarf). Some shops call them Skating Sets—since they are warm enough, when worn over a dress, for even this chilly sport. And they are most picturesque! The soft cap topped with a fuzzy ball is pulled far over the ears, with just a bit of hair showing at the sides; the sweater has roomy pockets for the further protection of one's hands, and the long scarf may be wound around the throat, or knotted artistically about the waist.

The sets come in almost any desired color or color combination; sweaters being priced at $10 and up, scarfs and caps about $2.50 each.

The radium watches that a certain shop shows are ideal gifts for travelers. The dial is marked with a luminous substance that shines brightly in the dark, making it possible to see the position of the hands any time of the night. These are $12, with $2 added if a leather traveler's case is wanted as well. This shop sells the radium clocks for invalids' use. These may be had at $20 in a size a little larger than the watch.

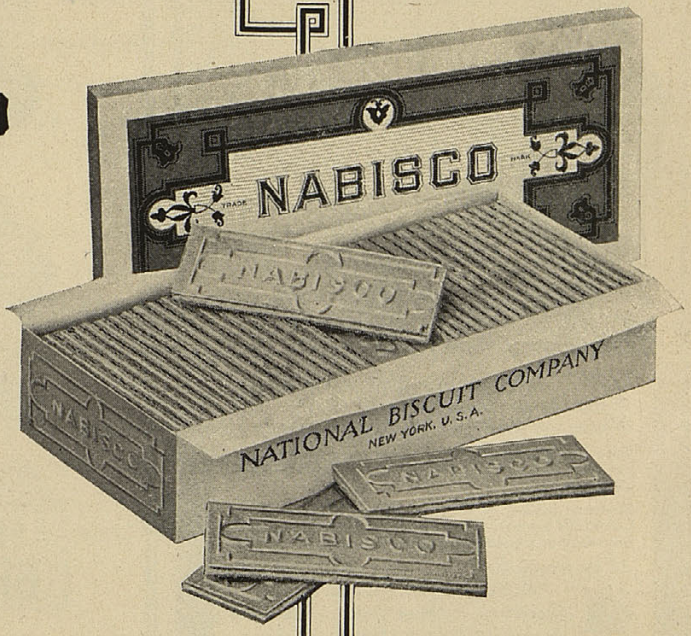
NEW RECORDS

Our young folk now amuse themselves with Trot Teas—a late development of the Tango Tea. The Trot is a charming romp rather than a dance, and its music is really alluring. There is an "Old Folks' Rag" and a "Reuben Fox Trot," just out, both of them fine for this sort of dancing, while the "Pavlowa Gavotte" comes with a Half and Half on the reverse side, adapted from Rubinstein's "Melody in F."

The patriotic airs of the warring nations are now to be had in record form, while for those more frivolous—the gems of the new musical plays, "Chin-Chin" and "The Girl from Utah," will be found particularly interesting. Harry Lauder's newest—"The Message Boy"—is one of his best—lovers of grand opera will appreciate a new record of the Rigoletto quartet, by Lucrezia Bori, Josephine Jacoby, John McCormack and Reinald Werrenrath.

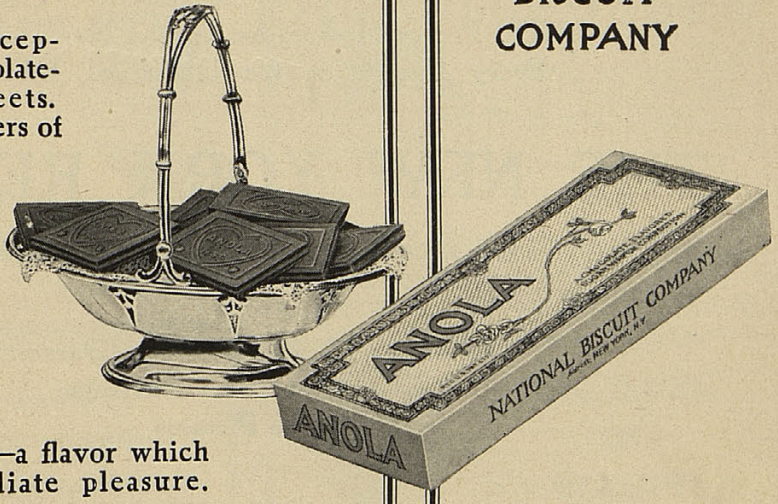
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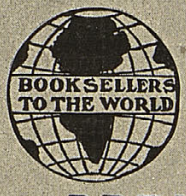
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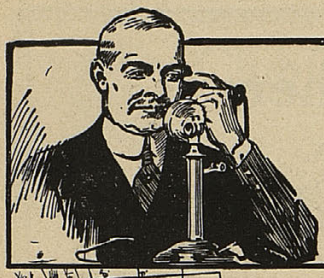
Miss Mizzi Hajos

THE DAWN OF BEAUTY

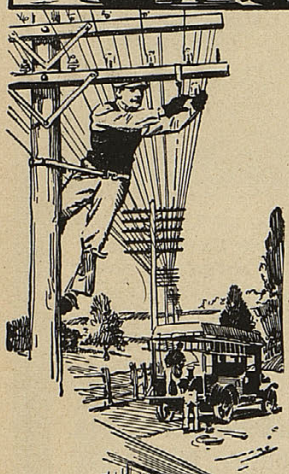
AURORA SPECIALTIES

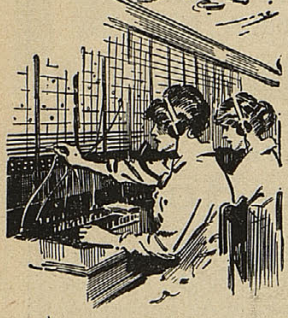
have meant the "Dawn of Beauty" to many. GARDENIA Bloom and GARDENIA Cream are beauty builders in the truest sense. PATE GRISE is the friend of middle age. SACHETS de FLORA, in dainty, silken "baglets" for the facial bath. By mail $2.00 each. All four $7.00. Request brings booklets.

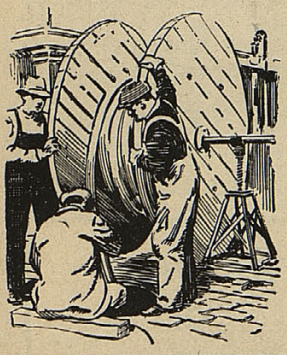
THE AURORA SPECIALTIES CO. Dept. N, Lowell, Mass.



The Cost of a Telephone Call







DID you ever think how much it costs to give you the telephone right-of-way anywhere, at all times?

Your telephone instrument, which consists of 130 different parts, is only the entrance way to your share of the vast equipment necessary in making a call.

Your line is connected with the great Bell highways, reaching every state in the union—with its poles, copper wire, cross arms and insulators in the country; its underground conduits, manholes, cable vaults and cables in the cities.

You have the use of switchboards costing upwards of $100,000,000. You enjoy the benefits of countless inventions which make possible universal telephone talk.

Your service is safeguarded by large forces of men building, testing and repairing lines. You command at all times the prompt attention of one or more operators.

How can such a costly service be provided at rates so low that all can afford it?

Only by its use upon a share-and-share-alike basis by millions of subscribers, and by the most careful economy in construction and operation. A plant so vast gives opportunity for ruinous extravagance; and judicious economy is as essential to its success as is the co-operative use of the facilities provided.

That the Bell System combines the maximum of usefulness and economy is proved by the fact that in no other land and under no other management has the telephone become such a servant of the masses.

AMERICAN TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY
AND ASSOCIATED COMPANIES

One Policy *One System* *Universal Service*



Every Call means a Pair of Wires from Subscriber to Subscriber - however many Calls may be made or however far apart Subscribers may be.



A Pot of Tea

THE day has long since passed in this country when people sip afternoon tea for the sake of something to do. Tea these days can be *too good* for any one to drink perfunctorily. It is meant to be enjoyed—and *is* enjoyed, especially so when the hostess serves Ridgways delicious blends.

The incomparable flavor and nation-wide popularity of the Ridgways blends have helped enormously to make tea drinking a daily practice of solid enjoyment.

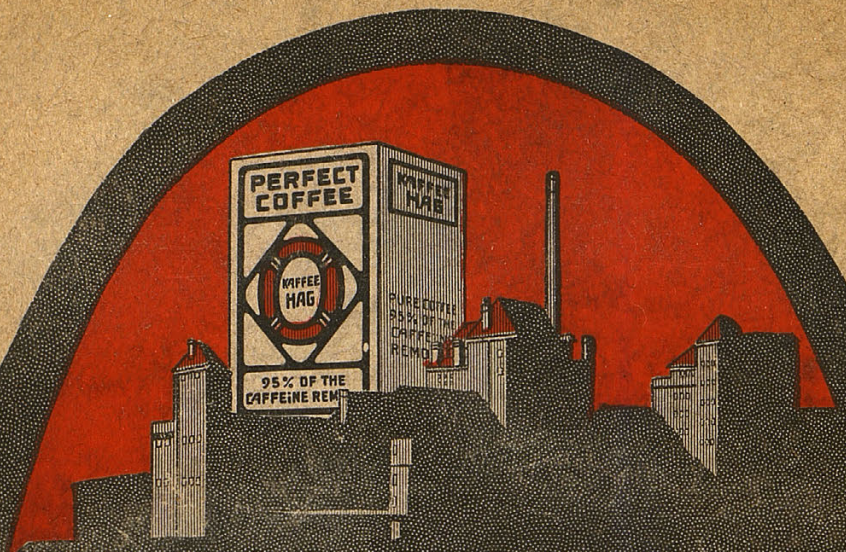
H. M. B. (Her Majesty's Blend) which sells for $1.00 a pound, is most frequently used by hostesses at carefully planned functions. For those who prefer a distinctive India Ceylon blend, Ridgways Gold Label Dollar Blend is especially recommended. Grocers everywhere sell it.

If it happens that your grocer does not have it, send 25 cents to our New York Office, for trial quarter pound tin.

Ridgways Tea

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